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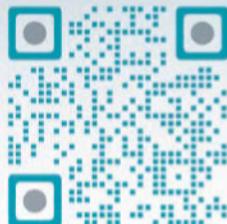
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WELCOME

ISSUE 626 SEPTEMBER 2023

FLOAT FISHING

I don't do enough of it and I expect I'm not alone; patiently watching a float in the anticipation of it disappearing under the water with a bite is an addictive way to fish, yet few sea anglers dedicate much time to it. This month we've made it our mission to change that with a range of features dedicated to float fishing. First up Dave Lewis explains the trick to getting thick lipped mullet feeding with ground bait while using light float tactics to target them in and around harbours and marinas. Chris Kennedy then provides 10 reasons to do more float fishing with his expert tips thrown in. The idea of targeting the remaining unclaimed British shore-caught shark records with float fishing tactics is an exciting idea and led me into the Sea Angler archives where I discovered a feature about Irish angler Jack Shine who was a pioneer of float fishing for porbeagle from the shores of County Clare. Fascinating stuff! Head to page 16 to find out more. Finally, Tim Macpherson provides some great advice on tackle and tactics to fish the float while afloat (page 52).

READER SURVEY

Knowing what makes you tick helps us provide you with more things to do with sea angling that we think you'll love. Head to page 56 for details of how to complete our new reader survey and you could be in with the chance of winning one of three Amazon vouchers worth £100. The survey shouldn't take more than 15 minutes to complete. Good luck!

TUNA NEWS

Are we one step closer to anglers being allowed to fish for bluefin

tuna in UK waters? That's the question we are asking with the news that a consultation has been launched on licensing recreational anglers to fish for bluefins. Currently, there's no way to licence anglers, or recreational boats, in the UK Fisheries Act. Licensing is a requirement of the international organisation which manages tuna fishing so any angling for tuna can't, and won't, happen until this has been resolved. Once it is, will the government allow a recreational fishery which, like the CHART programme, isn't just a way of delivering scientific research? Find out more on page 75.

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Don't miss out on the chance to receive free Sidewinder lures worth £30 when you subscribe to Sea Angler for just £47.45. This great offer includes three packs of four-inch super realistic Sidewinder sandeels in their Glitterbomb, Bass and Bluey styles. Head to page 21 for details on how to take advantage of this great offer.

NEW BOOK

Finally, I'm looking forward to getting my hands on a copy of a new book which John Holden has reviewed and has predicted will become a classic in sea angling writing. Shore Fishing with Anthony Pearson is an edited collection of his articles written between 1964 and 1974. Lancashire born Pearson had a passion for fishing the surf beaches of Wales and Ireland but died at the tragically early age of 42. Despite this he made a remarkable impact on sea angling writing in the two decades he was a journalist. As John says about the new book, "Do read it if you can". Read the full review on page 74

Until next month.
David



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SHORE ANGLER



Words and
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MASTERING MARINA MULLET

Dave Lewis guides you through the float fishing tackle and tactics to catch the elusive thick lipped mullet



The key to catching mullet is to get them feeding with ground bait

The thick lipped grey mullet is an inshore species, often found in freshwater. Thick lips are invariably the species you'll see cruising in tidal estuaries, harbours and marinas around the coast, often swimming in water barely deep enough to cover their dorsal fin. The fact that mullet are so often visible means that anglers frequently spend an inordinate amount of time trying to catch them.

However, unless they have the correct technique, rarely do they succeed.

The key to catching mullet is firstly to get them feeding confidently. Groundbaiting is the way to achieve this.

You can often turn up at your chosen venue and start introducing the groundbait while waiting for the fish arrive and start to feed. A bucket consisting of a couple of loaves of bread mixed with water to create a sloppy mush introduced on a little and often basis will do the trick. The addition of fish oil or any of the multitude of additives available in tackle shops can help.

A more effective way to plan your mullet fishing campaign is to introduce the groundbait in the area you intend to fish over a period of several days before you actually fish. This can be achieved by feeding bread mash into the area over the course of a few days, ideally at the same time of day or stage of tide, which should be the same time as when you ►



eventually plan to fish. If this is not possible an effective alternative is to tie an old onion sack filled with bread as close as possible to where you will be fishing, which is an especially effective technique for non-tidal harbours and marinas.

TACKLE

Depending on the circumstances of the venue you are fishing, float fishing is one of the most effective ways to catch mullet. A float allows you to accurately control the depth at which your bait fishes, and if fishing flowing water a float will allow you to trot the bait long distances back downtime in order to reach the spookiest of fish. Of course, a float is also a perfect visual indicator to show when a fish has taken your bait!

A medium carp rod and fixed spool reel is the perfect outfit for float fishing for mullet, but a spinning rod or even a light bass rod makes a perfectly acceptable alternative. Using line as light as possible will allow the fish to really show you what they are capable of in terms of prolonged, hi-speed runs. When fishing in and around harbours and marinas with moored boats, pontoons and other submerged snags, the conditions generally dictate the use of heavier tackle. Under such circumstances I would suggest using monofilament line between 8 - 12lb, which has the inherent strength to give you some chance of controlling a hooked fish. On such tackle even a 2lb mullet will prove to be a handful.

Rigging a float for mullet is easy. Sliding floats tend to be the most straightforward to work with in saltwater, though if you are a freshwater angler you can fish 'waggler' style, which involves the float being contacted only via the bottom ring. My preference for rigging a sliding float is to thread the main line through the float, then either tie a sliding stop knot above the float, or use a shop bought rubber float stop to set the depth. A second stop below the float, or a very small swivel connecting the main line to a

"Once hooked mullet run hard and fast, especially in shallow water. If you are fishing in a marina you should expect the fight to be short and dirty, rather than relaxed and skillful"



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hook length, prevents the float from sliding all the way down to the baited hook.

As a rule of thumb use the smallest float the prevailing conditions allow. Modern clear plastic floats that are weighted and subsequently self-cocking are perfect. Hooks between size 6 - 12 are ideal for mullet. You can use long shank Aberdeen hooks which are ideal for squeezing the bread around the shank, but personally I prefer super sharp and very strong carp hooks. Typically, I'll start by setting the float so that the bait fishes between 3 - 6ft below it. If using a self-cocking float I do not use any additional lead, which allows the bait to fall freely and naturally down through the water. If fishing flowing water a few shot pinched a foot or so above the hook will help maintain the bait at the desired depth.



USE YOUR LOAF

Stale bread is perfect – or even preferable – for use as groundbait as it breaks up easily into small pieces of crumb and has the effect of attracting rather than over feeding mullet. Remember, you are trying to attract mullet, you are not trying to provide them with so much free food that they quickly eat their fill before they find your hook bait.

When it comes to bread for use on the hook, you really do need to use the freshest bread you can obtain. A really fresh piece of bread, bread that is still moist and doughy from the oven that day, can be squeezed around the hook shank and will stay there for a surprisingly long time. Dry, stale bread that is past its best will quickly absorb water and dissolve. If you are unable to get hold of fresh bread, mixing stale bread into a stiff paste that can be moulded onto the hook is a workable alternative.

Once hooked mullet run hard and fast, especially in shallow water. If you are fishing in a marina you should expect the fight to be short and dirty, rather than relaxed and skillful. You must be prepared to apply sufficient pressure to forcibly turn a running fish, in order to avoid it swimming around snags or beneath pontoons. Be prepared to plunge your rod tip deep beneath the water in order to ensure the line does not become snagged. Strong hooks and a decent sized landing net are an absolute must. Forget any thought of gently sliding a played-out fish over the forward edge of the rim of the net; you'll need to make sure that either yourself or your companion uses the net to scoop the fish up at the earliest possible opportunity. Float fishing for harbour mullet fishing is great fun. Give it a go this summer! ■





THE SOLE OF NEWHAVEN

Mike Deacon takes Sea Angler editor David Mitchell on a mission to find sole and sees first-hand the impact of ever decreasing angling access at the Port of Newhaven

There is no small amount of irony that one of the few remaining fishable marks at the Port of Newhaven in Sussex is nicknamed the Hope. This small section of the port's channel wall on the River Ouse, named after the Hope Inn which overlooks the harbour entrance, can fish well but isn't much longer than 100m, leaving little room when the fishing is at its best. With the threat of the owners of the port, the French company Transmanche Ferries, closing the east arm to fishing, locals can only hope that this venue remains accessible.

Anglers and members of the public said au revoir to Newhaven Sandy West Beach in 2008 after the French owners deemed it to be part

of the working area of the port and didn't meet health and safety standards for the admission of the public. Access to it was closed off and with it went one of the best beaches to dig lugworm and white ragworm in the area.

Soon after, the authorities closed off access to the breakwater too due to health and safety concerns and insurance liabilities. Generations of anglers had fished from either side of the breakwater which provided excellent fishing for many species throughout the year with ample space for anglers to fish in comfort even when the mackerel were in and every man and his dog were mackie bashing on summer's evenings. Alas, eventually it was au revoir to Newhaven Breakwater too. Aside from the Hope, the sole ►



remaining part of the port to be accessible to anglers is the East Arm; however, even then the authorities make it as clear as possible that angling is technically prohibited throughout the port but 'tolerated' as long as it doesn't become a nuisance. It was on the east arm that I was keen to show Sea Angler readers both how the fishing from the port here can still produce great results but also how busy it can be as a result of anglers being denied access to most of the rest of the port.

IN SEARCH OF SOLE

Arriving at the east arm shortly after low water we would be fishing the tide up with two hours before sunset. The arm was still relatively quiet as we set up camp on the eastern side overlooking Seaford Bay. The plan was to target sole using light gear tactics. Armed with fresh, local black lug and harbour rag everything was looking favourable apart from the persistent and unseasonable stiff south westerly wind which threatened to turn the evening into a weed-fest. At least the wind was on our backs. One rod was used to fish a large mackerel bait close into the wall just on the off chance that a bass or conger might interrupt the sole session.

Within five minutes of the first cast the tell-tale rattle on David's rod suggested something of the flat variety had taken the lugworm. However, rather than a sole a small but



Fishing the port entrance from the Hope

welcome plaice came to hand, and to top it off, there was no weed to be seen. Next followed a small silver eel for me just before dark, which is when the session took an unexpected turn.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

A small group of anglers had joined us at the end of the arm but dusk brought with it three more groups of anglers laden not just with fishing gear but also enough electrical and

lighting equipment to supply an Elton John world tour. Before we knew it these lights had been rigged onto rods and lowered over the railing and into the sea, illuminating the water like a hotel swimming pool at night.

With no indication that there was a significant risk of being fried alive by mixing electricity and saltwater like this, down went strings of feathers. The light attracts small fish and with it the anglers' target species: scad. Why we don't eat scad, or horse mackerel as they are also known in the UK, I can't tell you. What I can tell you is that across much of the rest of the world scad (or variants of the species) are a highly prized eating fish. Unfortunately for our new companions, the strong winds and tides had coloured the water heavily and there were no scad or mackerel to be found, only a few bass of varying, and questionable, size found their way into the waiting cool boxes.

Now fishing cheek by jowl amongst the chaos of feathers, electricity cables and our LED-lit seabed we looked on with a combination of amusement, surprise and horror. This will kill the fishing. It might be an early night home for us too, I thought to myself. The tide had also begun to strengthen and with it came the killer of many an angler's fishing session: the weed.

However, on we pressed, fascinated with the obvious passion for fishing our multi-lingual party of anglers had – even if the tactics they were deploying weren't necessarily what we would consider to be 'fair game'. It's lucky we ▶



"Next followed a small silver eel for me just before dark, which is when the session took an unexpected turn"





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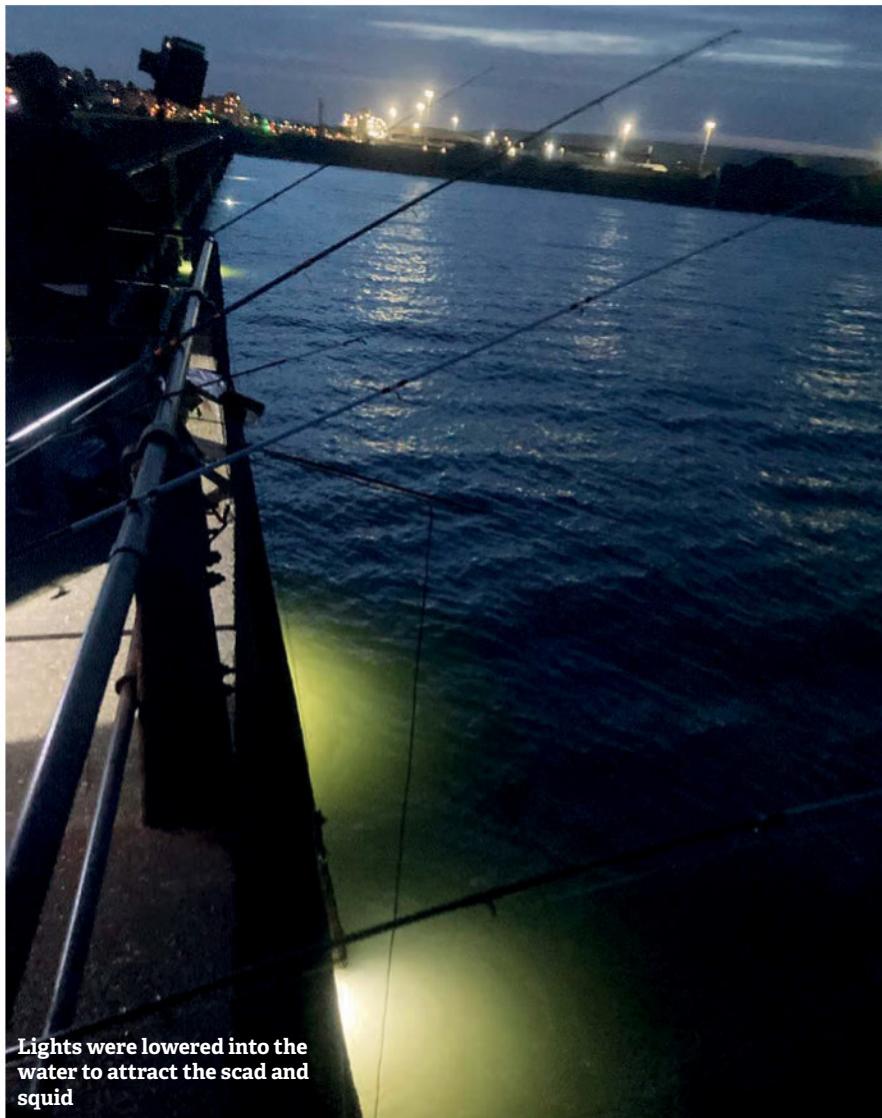
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Lights were lowered into the water to attract the scad and squid

did because not long after I felt a rattle and a bend in my rod resulted in the first sole of the evening. Dover sole can be very particular feeders and when the bites start coming it's best to have baits in the water and be ready before, for whatever reason, they go off the feed again.

Reeling into change to a fresh bait and make hay while the sun (or LED light!) was shining, David realised he too had something on the line. As the leader came up through the water the lights made it easy to identify not just one sole but a double shot. At 36cm the bigger of the two was a new PB for David and a lovely keeper made all the sweeter by the cacophony of activity around us. Fishing baits in the dark, as we were, appeared to be a bit of a novelty as our new friends gathered to see the soles and ask what they were – clearly having never feathered one up with a flood light before.

Hopes were high for this little run of fish to continue but apart from a flounder the bites dried up and we decided it was mission accomplished in search of Sussex sole. With four species, including a trio of flatfish, caught under less-than-ideal conditions we were pleased to be able to prove that Newhaven east

arm is well worth a visit when the conditions are right.

What it also proved is that banning access to other areas only concentrates anglers into the remaining venues. More people displaced from venues and squeezed together elsewhere inevitably leads to more noise, more disturbance, more conflict and a less favourable fishing experience for all involved. It's then only a matter of time before squeezing more and more anglers together causes friction which inevitably spills over and the call to further restrict angling becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What's the solution then? Well, it's no wonder that local anglers feel more than a little let down by their elected representatives: the district council has only recently announced a £10m cash injection to redevelop the seafront. Great – how about using some of that money to address health and safety concerns to reopen the breakwater and West Beach to anglers and provide some new angling facilities? Instead, West Beach promenade will receive a restaurant, two new beach volleyball courts, an outdoor gym and a children's play area. Call me old fashioned but angling provides the benefits

Mike with the first sole of the evening





of at least two of these, if not three, and for free! Why isn't anyone listening to anglers?

We asked Zoe Nicholson, the leader of Lewes District Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building, to comment on the benefits this redevelopment will have for sea anglers and the future of sea angling in Newhaven."

This is a once in a lifetime council development in Newhaven that will transform an area of the town that has been neglected for too long. My hope is that it will become a destination venue for people from far and wide, whether that it is to take advantage of the fantastic new restaurant or to simply enjoy quality leisure time pursuing their own interests, including sea angling, which we very much hope will see continue." ■

NEED TO KNOW

Situated approximately 9 miles east of Brighton, Newhaven is connected to the M/A23 and the M/A27. Once in Newhaven town centre, to get to the Hope Inn (BN9 9DN) and West Beach follow the road signs along South Road and go on until you come to the Hope Inn on your right. Slightly further on there is a large, concreted parking area overlooking the large sandy bay. There a parking charge of £2 payable from 8am - 5pm, seven days a week in May to November. Disabled access here and at the Hope wharf is reasonably good.



To access the East pier in Newhaven, head east across the railway line level crossing, turn right and follow Beach Road to the Southern Water Sewage treatment works next to the footbridge over the railway line. Limited roadside parking is available under the trees opposite the industrial warehouses. Do not obstruct the gates to the Southern Water works. Regrettably, the venue is unsuitable for wheelchair users as the footbridge has no disabled access. Head over the footbridge across the railway line and follow the footpath across the creek to the Newhaven East beach. Turn right and walk along the shingle footpath to the pier. Total walk time from the car is about 10-15 minutes. Tidemills beach also can offer good fishing for bass, flatties, gurnards and golden grey mullet along with mackerel and garfish in the summer, and it offers a bit of space if the pier is busy.

Bait and tackle can be bought or ordered for collection from Tools & Tackle, 11 Bridge St, Newhaven, BN9 9PH, tel: 01273 514829



WHY YOU SHOULD DO MORE FLOAT FISHING

TOP 10 REASONS AND TIPS

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Most Sea Anglers are predominantly bait or lure anglers. Many of you are missing out on one of the most pleasurable types of fishing, particularly at this time of year. Chris Kennedy explains the merits and advantages of float fishing

GETTING KIDS HOOKED

The youth are the future of this sport; without them, this wonderful sport dies. Many styles of fishing are too complicated or nuanced to pick up in a few moments, but float fishing is perhaps the exception. The wonderful simplicity of casting a float and slither of bait into the sea and simply watching for it being taken under by a predatory fish is very easy for the child or newcomer to angling. If you are an experienced fisherman supervising others, managing and keeping an eye on things is straightforward. Some of my own first fishing experiences were spent sitting on a rock whilst watching an orange bubble float bob around the edge of a reef and suddenly be pulled under by pollock or ballan wrasse. It was so exciting as a child, we'd spent countless hours, and you never knew what you might catch. These adventures were one of the reasons I became addicted to fishing, and I wouldn't trade these magical experiences with my father for anything.



ROUGH GROUND



One of the fantastic benefits of using a float is that it enables you to fish the snaggiest of rough ground without losing any gear. Tackle is expensive, and there are plenty of areas that many anglers avoid because they are so tackle-hungry. Rocky reefs, boulders, kelp beds and artificial structures like wrecks are often havens for many species. They provide a perfect habitat for fish to nest, shelter, hunt and find food. However, with a float, you can drift over this hellishly snaggy ground and entice fish to come out and take your bait. As long as you are watching your float and ready to strike, you'll nearly always avoid being taken into the reef and losing your gear. You're going to find this an excellent method for targeting wrasse, bass and black bream over mixed ground. Lessening tackle losses is better for the fish and the environment in general.

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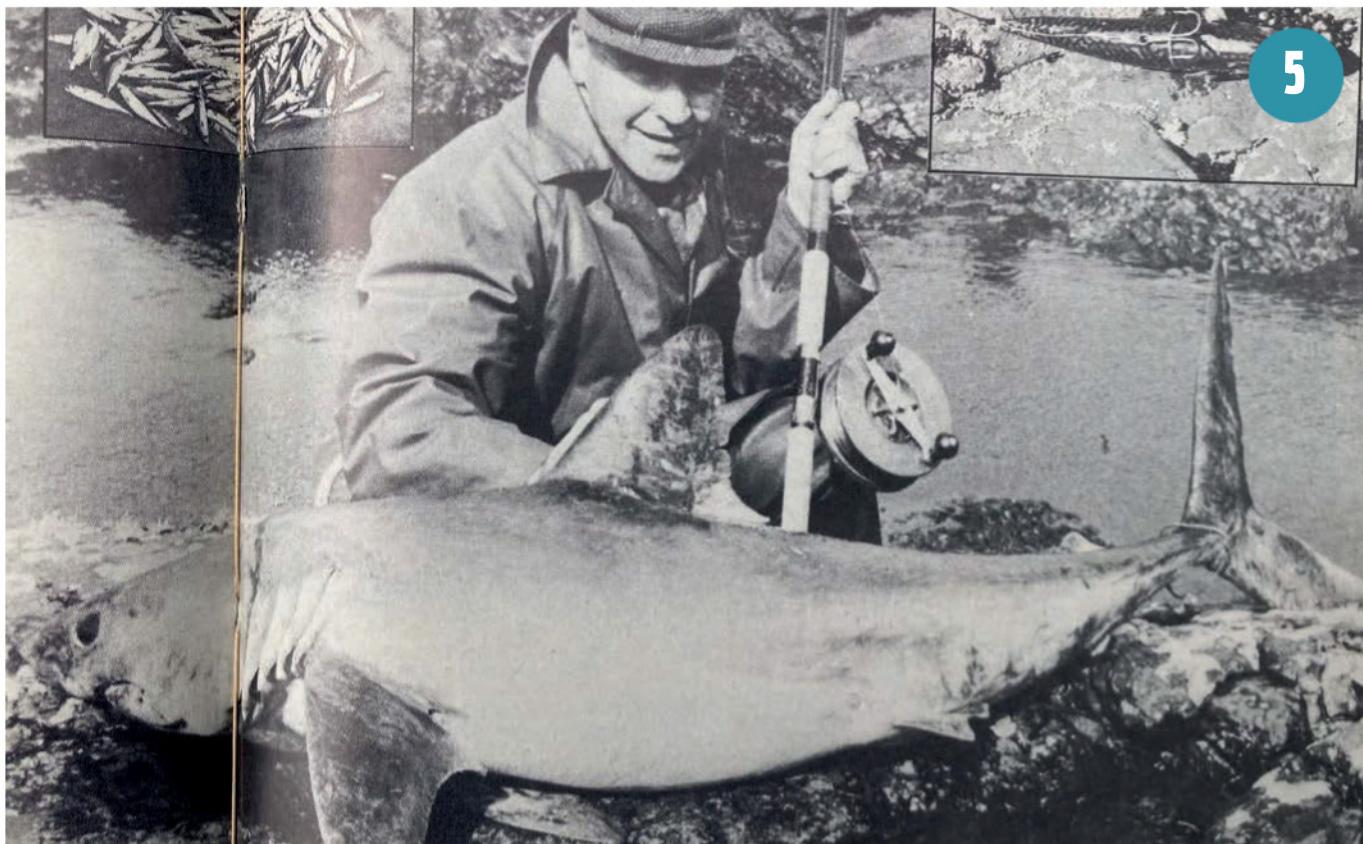
An advertisement for Vass-Tex 3300 Series Breathable Systems Technology. It features a person wearing olive-green waders and black boots standing in water. The text 'The most advanced heavy duty breathable wader on the market!' is at the top. Below it, a box says 'OUT NOW! Order via your local Vass Stockist See Website for Info & Video'. It shows close-ups of the waders: 'Reinforced Knees', 'Zipped Chest Pocket', and 'Waist Belt'. Price information for the Vass Hybrid 700 Chest Wader is listed: RRP £339.98 (Non-Studded) and RRP £359.98 (Tungsten Studded Sole). The text 'VASS HYBRID CHEST WADER 700' is prominently displayed. To the right, other Vass-Tex products are shown: 'VASS-TEX 350 LIGHTWEIGHT PVC LINER', 'VASS-TEX 700 TOUGH MATTE/LK', and 'VASS-TEX E-ROD'. A 'SPECIAL EDITION 'DARK CAMO'' section is shown with 'VASS-TEX STEALTH FINISH (VASS REDUCED LIGHT REFLECTION)' and prices: RRP £159.98 and RRP £169.98 (studded sole option). The Vass logo with a soldier silhouette is at the bottom left, and the website 'www.VASS-TEX.com' is at the bottom right. Social media icons for YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram are also present.



3

USE THE TIDE

As a child, my father would take my brother and I to the Channel Islands. The Bailiwick of Guernsey – which encompasses Herm, Sark, Alderney and Guernsey – is famed for its strong tides and large tidal range. Things are always moving, as are the fish. My dad would find these spots where you could cast a float into an outgoing current, and you would open the bail arm and gradually let line out as the tide took the float. I can vividly remember this one spot where you would do this perilous climb down and get onto a tidal island, and at the tip of the islet, two currents would meet. We'd get there two hours before low, and the outgoing tide would take our floats 50 or 60 yards out and slightly left; when we hit those ranges, we'd suddenly be savaged by garfish. Upon retrieve, the gars would be flying through the air as they tried to shake the size 6 hook. As children, we'd find it so exhilarating that these miniature swordfish would be fighting so hard in the afternoon sun. I guess it was the closest thing that we got to Hemingway's "The old man and the sea" as children. It was such good sport that we'd want to do it day after day until our week's holiday was up.



5

FOR THE DREAMERS CHASING BIG GAME

I am sure for most beginners or intermediate anglers it has occurred to you how far you can take float fishing in the UK or abroad. What if I told you that I was shark fishing on Ascension Island, an overseas territory of the UK in the South Atlantic, using a balloon float? I was casting a balloon with a big bloody bait suspended underneath on a 12/0 hook and waiting for all hell to be unleashed. Some of those fish produced the most memorable battles of my life, resulting in fish around 400lb at my feet. It may have occurred to you that there are some big British record fish claims which are still vacant. Species like porbeagle, thresher, blue shark or even some pelagic species that are often caught from boats close to land, may be accessible with a balloon float from the shore. Offshore wind or the right tide could have you fishing effectively for something very special. If you want some inspiration, please revisit the works of Irish angler Jack Shine (pictured) who landed many porbeagle sharks from the shore, just across the sea on the west coast of Ireland. We are only limited by our own imagination!



CHILL TIME

We all know how stressful life can be. Sea angling is an antidote to life's trouble, and conducive to good mental health and well-being. However, sometimes our lives leave us so tired that we just don't want to carry all the heavy gear to a mark and go through the almost militant rigours of packing everything we need. Float fishing provides a very welcome alternative; you really only need hooks, floats, line, a little bait, plus a rod and reel. It virtually weighs nothing, takes up very little space in the car, and just takes seconds to pack. It's also just as easy to pack down and be off home when you've had enough. I love these light sessions when I am fed up with being overladen with heavy gear I need for bottom fishing; They are very welcome indeed.

NIGHT FISHING

6

As I mentioned earlier, rough ground is a challenge most of the time, but not when you have a float. How can you see a float at night? Some years ago, a clever friend of mine rigged a Starlite mini-glowstick above their float and used this method very effectively after dark. The beauty of this is you can sit happily with your head torch off, not to disturb fish and focus on what your float is doing. Believe it or not, my friend, Will, was pulling out conger eels fishing in the pitch black, fishing just beneath us on Dorset's rocky Jurassic coast. Squid and cuttlefish anglers also use this method at night when they often deploy more than one rod and jig; it works perfectly.



LIVE-BAITING

If you are after that big bass, and you want to improve your success rate when the water is clear, use a live-bait under a float. The key is to use a float that is large enough not to be pulled under by your live-bait. In my opinion, coalfish is a wonderful fish to use live. Scad is also awesome, mainly because if they are rigged correctly, then they never expire. Next up and more commonly, many sea anglers will choose mackerel as their first choice, and they do pick out some wonderful bass. Tope love them also, as would a decent pollock. In Guernsey, close to me, some anglers use live sandeel or launce under a float, which is very effective for bass. Around Sandbanks, Poole, in Dorset, small wrasse also work very well under a float, for bass. One of the tremendous advantages of this method is that you know your live-bait is fishing, and if any predators are around, they'll smash it. It's probably the most exciting way to fish in my opinion, and for the lazy angler, they don't have to change baits regularly or check it's still there.

7



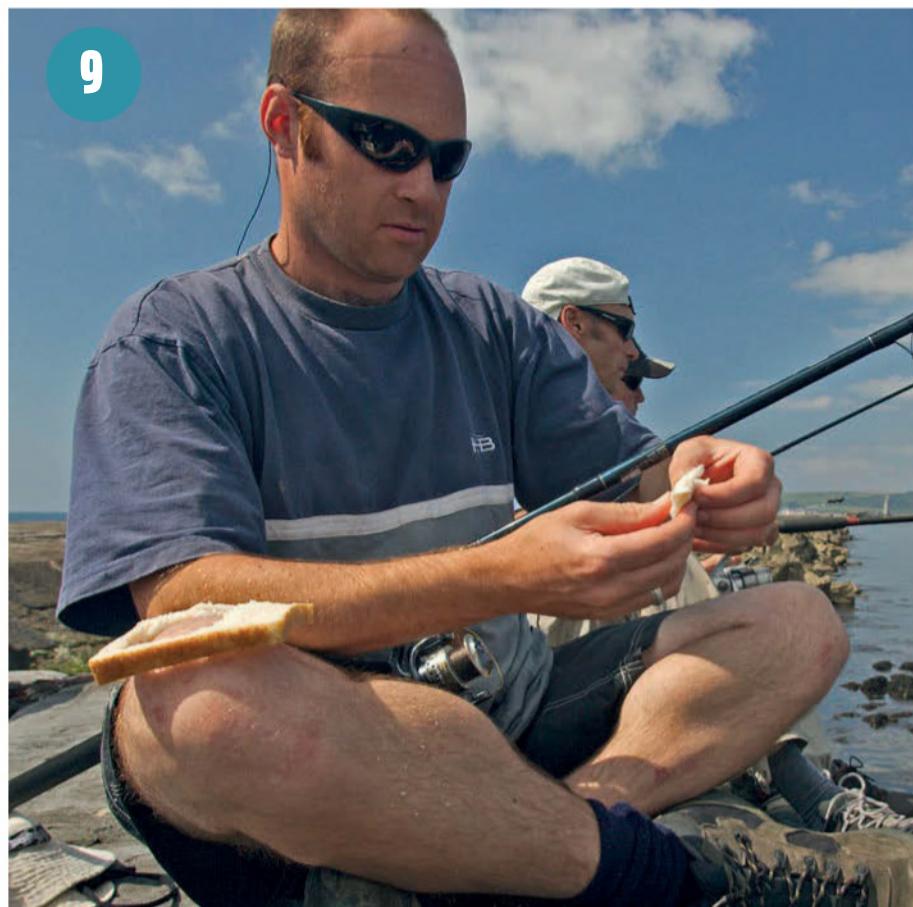
FLOAT WITH A FIXED GRIP LEAD

8



Sometimes you may be fishing in relatively strong tides, and you may have a specific area that you know holds fish. However, the strong tide or winds will move your float and bait quickly across this ground, and perhaps your suspended bait is not there long enough to pick up fish. There is a method where you take your spinning rod or beachcaster, and cast a single grip lead. This catches the bottom and holds in place. You then take your float, with its baited hook length, and clip it onto your mainline with a small snaplink. You then run it down the line (like a zipline) until it reaches the surface of the sea. The beauty is that it fishes the exact spot that you want it to. The downside is that when you see your float go under, you'll have to wind in very quickly so that your grip lead catches the snaplink and puts you in direct contact with the fish. Obviously, you may lose the odd fish, but the method can prove very fruitful at certain venues. It works very well when cliff fishing in strong tides, trying to catch bait fish, or gars.

9



THE BEST FOR MULLET

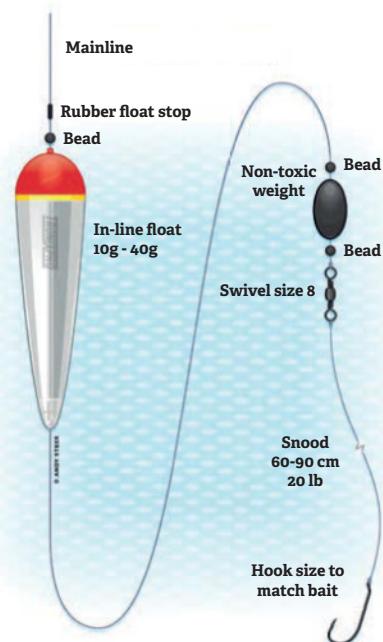
We have three species of grey mullet in the UK: the golden grey, thin lip, thick lip. Float fishing is such an effective way to pick out these very finicky fish, which are often reluctant to take the bait. Float fishing in still waters like harbours allows you to use methods like throwing flakes of bread in the direct vicinity of your float, whilst your trace and size #6 hook is hidden in a flake of bread. You sit and wait as thick-lipped mullet come and tentatively takes the pieces of bread until they finally take your baited trace, and the excitement begins. Mullet are very hard fighting on light gear, and for this reason you see many carp or freshwater anglers journeying to places like Poole or Christchurch harbours to enjoy the fantastic sport that float fishing for mullet provides. Pontoons in marinas are ideal locations. You'll need lots of patience, but it's very addictive, rewarding fishing. I would use clear coloured or darkly coloured floats, as small as possible. You'll be constantly watching for a take.

TIPS & REFINEMENTS

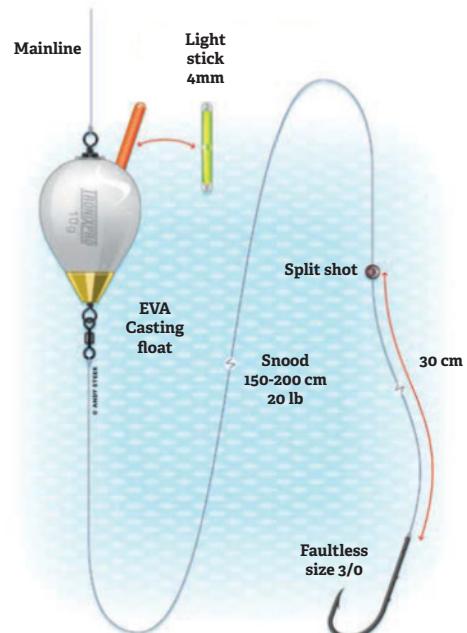
10

Depending on which species you are targeting, where they are feeding and the depth of water you are fishing, you are going to want to adjust the length of the line to the hook to reflect where exactly in the water column you desire to be. This can be done easily with conventional two-tone cigar floats and stop knots. With a bubble float you'll be more limited and will have to set the hook length and tie it. A trick to assess the depth of the sea is to cast a lead down and make note of how much line goes out before it hits the bottom. If you use a bubble float, fill it with enough water so that it is just about buoyant. If a fish takes it, the less resistant initially, the better. The same with a cigar float, balanced with a drilled-out round lead: make sure the weight balances the float, leaving it just about buoyant. Conveniently, most decent tackle shops and online retailers now sell complete float sets with the lead, which are ready to go. If you're a first timer at this method, I would start there and initially target a species like mackerel. If you are trying for a fussy fish like mullet it's often better to use small floats painted in natural colours so that they will be less conspicuous, particularly if the hook length or distance to the float from the bait is relatively short.

SLIDING FLOAT RIG



CASTING FLOAT RIG



I can't recommend float fishing enough. It provides a lot of sport and excitement, helps you get out in nature in the better weather and is less intensive than many methods, yet no less addictive. Best of luck!

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DIGGING FOR VICTORY

Collecting your own fresh bait has many advantages. Martin Dekker explains how to get your hands dirty by digging for two of the essential go-to baits for sea angling: ragworms and lugworms

Over the years we have seen a lot of changes in the sea angling world. It seems nearly everything has been modernised: rods, reels, leads, rigs and entire arsenals of new equipment developed over the years and which now populate our tackle boxes; not to mention boats and the equipment that we find on them! Where one person may think we are going completely mad, the other eagerly makes use of these ingenious developments. Remarkably, one of the most important aspects, the bait we use, has not really developed for the simple reason that it is either not possible, extremely difficult or simply too expensive. ▶



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Attempts have certainly been made. Think of our always "fresh" and very agile king rags from France and even Korea: A nice attempt, but not really successful. The only thing that has worked out well is breeding of the common red rags. There is a lot of fishing done with these, but in addition to the fact that we are very dependent on one grower there is one major disadvantage to these: just like with everything that is farmed – seabass, eel and trout – their smell and taste differs greatly from the wild variant.

Yes, our farmed king rags certainly catch fish, at times even very successfully; yet, the use of rags and lugworms found in nature make a very big difference. In terms of smell, taste, mobility and even colour, natural worms are a much more natural snack for most fish species. This is also the reason match anglers almost always dig their own bait: not only will they have the best bait, but they can also select the best and most beautiful lugworms and rags among them.

There have been very few developments in the field of digging bait. The only progress that has taken place is a very limited amount of bait dragging where boats in Poole Harbour use dredges with tines to catch ragworm as they drag them across the seabed. As recreational anglers, we depend on our local tackle shops. They have agreements with bait collectors, hence fresh bait is always available. Those who order in advance are almost guaranteed to get the best bait.

GETTING TOOLED UP

Just like match anglers, we can of course also dig our own sea bait. It's actually not that difficult at all. All we need is a flat-tined fork, available at most local hardware stores, a bucket and possibly a sieve. In a relatively short time you can collect enough bait for an entire day's fishing. Most are found towards the lower reaches of the intertidal zone, mostly from sheltered beaches where the ground consists of a mix of sand and mud. At low tide the area dries out and during high tide they are submerged. So, you always do your digging at low water. Okay, so digging



yourself sounds appealing, but just sticking a fork in the mud somewhere isn't going to bring you much success. In fact, before you have even finished you may have already received a hefty fine! Watch out where you are – digging may be strictly prohibited! Where you are allowed to dig is determined by law. Bait collection is being increasingly managed by the regional Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities around the coast of England.

Check for local by-laws and be aware that digging on private land, even for personal use, requires the permission of the landowner. There may be seasonal restrictions on digging to protect overwintering birds from being disturbed and other areas may be protected for conservation or health and safety reasons. Ignorance can't be used as an excuse to avoid a fine so do your homework before sticking a fork in the ground.

READY TO DIG

So we find ourselves at low tide on a huge sandbank. Somewhere below is our bait, free and fresh. All we have to do is dig, but where do you start? The easiest to find are lugworms. They give themselves away by the casts which you see everywhere around you. These piles are the excrement of the lugworms. Where there are too many casts to count you can simply dig a trench and collect the worms as you uncover them. Don't dig too large a forkful: not only is it hard work, but the worms remain hidden in the large pile of sand that you turned over. It is better to dig small slices and turn them over each time. If all goes well you will find plenty of worms. Take them out carefully; if that doesn't work, break the sand open with your hands. Just make sure not to pull on the lugworms otherwise you will break them. If you find none, just try somewhere else until you find them. Lugworms like to be together, sometimes up to 70 worms per square meter. If the ▶



"Ignorance can't be used as an excuse to avoid a fine so do your homework before sticking a fork in the ground"





cast are fewer and more spaced out then the best tactic is to identify the cast and the small depression in the sand which marks the other end of the burrow. Dig the section out between the cast and the depression and you will find the worm in its u-shaped burrow somewhere between these two points.

During your search for lugworms you will see there is even more life hidden in the sand and most of it can actually be used as bait as well. Small ragworm, for instance, are remarkably light coloured, which gave them their name 'whites'. The whites are really a top bait for many fish species. Flounder absolutely love them and fishing them under a float it is a very good bait for acrobatic garfish, especially in early spring when the garfish are just arriving. Due to their small size and thickness, you have to be careful how you present them. Subtle is the keyword. A small thin wire hook is a must, as is a very thin bait needle.

In addition to the whites, you will also encounter other small rags known as maddies or harbour rag. This is a small worm that is loved by many fish species. Again, they are quite fragile and you should treat them gently. Maddies have become an indispensable part of competition angling and are an essential bait

for catching golden grey mullet in many places.

Here and there you will also come across the common red rag. The common red rag can get quite big and thick and is suitable for all types of fish. The smaller specimens are especially good for all kinds of flatfish species. The king rag is ideal for fishing for bass and rays – species such as stingrays are caught almost exclusively on king rag and nothing else.

However, even a large flounder will take a king rag. Ragworm are not cheap so digging your own is definitely cost effective, especially when you use a lot over the course of a year. Ragworm prefer a harder bottom. If you really want to target rags, concentrate around shell banks, such as oyster and mussel beds. Not on the banks, but next to them.

Keep your collected worms in a bucket with some fresh, cool sea water and sand. Ragworm, lugworms and maddies - everything is allowed to mix in the bucket. When you have collected enough bait, it's a good idea to wash everything off with a sieve. Together with all the worms, sand, mud and pieces of shell can end up in the bucket. The sand isn't that bad, but the broken shells are quite sharp and may damage the worms and any dead or bleeding worms will kill the other worms if left in the same water.

STORAGE

Now that you've collected all this fresh bait, it's time to go fishing. When you head to your fishing spot, simply store the bait in a bucket or cooler with a layer of seawater. As long as it stays cool, you can keep worms alive for up to 10 days provided you change the water every now and then and connect an air pump to it. If you don't have a pump simply wash off the rags in seawater and pat them dry. Next mix them with some peat and wrap them in an old newspaper. You can easily keep them in the fridge for a few days, but a little care is still needed: check your bait every day. Dead or damaged worms need to be removed directly. You may also need to replace the newspaper every now and then.

There is also another great advantage on storing in a newspaper with peat. The rags will dry out a bit, hence the skin becomes a bit firmer and more red. As a result they sit more firmly on the hook and draw a bit more attention. Are the rags starting to smell after a few days? No problem, even smelly rags catch great fish. However, by the time they start smelling bad, it's time to get rid of them!

The same advice applies to lugworms. Store them in cool seawater with an aerator or in a newspaper with peat. Don't use garden peat, it has a different acidity and will kill your worms. Lugworms are less sensitive and contaminate each other less easily. Nevertheless, it's still a good idea to check every day for any dead worms and refresh the newspaper.

Catching a fish on bait you've collected yourself adds another layer of satisfaction to your angling. So grab a fork, a bucket and enjoy collecting your own bait. It's all part of the wonderful experience of being a sea angler! ■



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THOMAS TIDAL TAF

Dave Lewis explores the bass and flounder fishing opportunities along the beautiful tidal stretch of this Carmarthenshire river

The River Taf in south west Wales is not an especially large river. It meanders at leisure through the rolling Carmarthenshire countryside, eventually reaching the sea near the village of Laugharne where it joins the rivers Towy and Gwendraeth to enter Carmarthen Bay as one great estuary sandwiched between the spectacular twin surf beaches of Cefn Sidan and Pendine.

Laugharne is, of course, the one-time home of Dylan Thomas, whose famous boat house home and writing shed are located at the water's edge on the banks of the Taf affording truly magnificent views across the estuary. It is widely acknowledged that the heavily wooded hill behind the boat house was the inspiration for what is certainly Dylan's best-known piece of work: Under Milk Wood. And it is under Milk Wood where you'll find one of the most productive areas to fish.

The optimum time to fish this estuary is around two hours either side of high water, ideally on tides

of around 10.2m Swansea scale: that's a neap tide. Tides larger than 10.5m create especially difficult conditions due to the excessive push of current, especially during the ebb. Further, there are safety concerns as there are several places where the tide pushes all the way up to the rock edges below the woods, cutting off your safe retreat from the beach.

SPECIES

Flounder are one of the most prolific species within the estuary. Bunches of maddies fished off long flowing traces are the bait of choice with most locals looking to catch flounder, though lugworm or chunks of peeler crab also work well. Ground bait consisting of mashed bread can be used to attract shoals of feeding mullet to within range; both thick lipped and golden grey mullet are caught here in good numbers.

The Taf is noted for producing big bass, including specimens weighing well into double





figures. King rag is one of the most productive big bass baits in this estuary; though, unsurprisingly, peeler crab will catch plenty of fish, especially during the first moult of crab during the spring. The most productive time to fish here for flounder is from late October through to January. Bass can be caught from March until November. Mullet and occasionally silver eels add some variety through the summer and early autumn.

TACKLE & TACTICS

During summer hordes of bait robbing crabs result in the average life expectancy of any worm bait being limited to a maximum of around five minutes before it is picked to a bare hook.

Thankfully the crabs disperse, or at least become less of a nuisance, with the first hard frosts of autumn. In an attempt at maintaining a decent bait for as long as possible try using polystyrene beads to lift the baits up off the bottom and, hopefully, out of the reach of the crabs.

One of the joys of estuary fishing is that it often allows the use of light tackle. A 2-4oz bass outfit is perfect, though if conditions are suitable you can use even lighter tackle. Some anglers use freshwater outfits designed for carp and barbel, which are perfect. Lure fishing can be very effective for bass. Like many estuaries the Taf is perfect for saltwater fly fishing. ■



NEED TO KNOW

To get to Laugharne exit the A40 just to the west of Carmarthen at St Clears and follow the A4066. Drive down through the town passing Browns Hotel, Dylan Thomas's favourite watering hole, and park in the car park adjacent to the foreshore below Laugharne Castle.



You can fish at several locations both to the left and the right, with one of the more popular spots being immediately beneath Dylan's house. To get to the area fished follow the path leading past Dylan Thomas's house, which will take you to the foreshore.

NEAREST TACKLE SHOPS:

- Anglers Corner, Llanelli: 01554 773981
- Anglers Corner, Milford Haven: 01646 698899 or 07918 614357



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Gran Canaria Celebrates it's III International Deep Sea Fishing Open in August

From 24 to 26 August 2023, Gran Canaria will host the **International Deep-Sea Fishing Open** for the third year running, organized by the **Pasito Blanco Yacht Club**. With 40 boats competing including both local crews and international fishers, the competitive offshore fishing will showcase the magnificent nautical conditions of the island. Once again, the Blue Marlin will be the most sought after with a **reward of 400 points**. White Marlins will also be worth **50 points** and those who capture non-red tunas over 50kg will also be rewarded **one point per extra kilogram**. True to tradition, participants can use any kind of bait, dead or alive, and pieces will be caught, marked, and released, strictly following the rules of the IGFA.

The waters of Gran Canaria hide a completely uneven terrain, a result of its volcanic formation, making the destination a paradise for deep-sea fishing and its geographical location, subtropical climate and ocean currents result in an abundant marine life. In the south of the island, less than a mile from Positano Blanco, the seabed is **400 meters deep**, while a little further towards the horizon, the sea floor exceeds **1,000 meters**. These natural conditions allow for large and strong fish of both a sedentary species, but many migratory fish. Meaning the possibilities that Gran Canaria offers for sport fishing are immense. The registration period for the contest is now open. Enter on www.pasitoblanco.com. The Pasito Blanco Yacht Club is a member of the Gran Canaria Blue brand.

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Tales from the tideline

TIME FOR AN UPGRADE?

After a period of mourning Simon Smith is giddy with excitement at the implications of breaking a favourite rod: buying a new one!



You know the moment: you're winding up for a cast into that likely looking eddy, or maybe you're playing something with a little more meat on its bones than the scant pickings you've recently had to endure. Or, worse, perhaps you're doing your best to pull out of an awkward snag (always the moment that, with hindsight, makes you think: Why the hell didn't I listen to myself and not cast into that spot in the first place?). Whichever it is, it has inevitably led you to that moment when the beloved piece of carbon in your hand makes that sickening CRRRRACCKKKK that lurches the stomach.

Make no mistake; this is a hugely traumatic experience. Some say that the death of a beloved pet hits you hard, but to anglers, the death of a favourite piece of tackle bites just as deeply as the passing of little Fifi for, when you lose that piece of tackle, you lose all the hours and experiences that were poured into it.

To begin with, there's the moment of selection. For what seemed an age, you walked back and forth in front of the rack of rods lined

up like a small armoury, picking one up here and there, testing the give in the tip, the feel of it between the hands, the amount of steel or give in the mid-section and butt. You stood there, visualising sessions yet to come, fantasising about fish yet to be caught and weighing up the pros and cons of this rod against all those others in your collection when chasing those imagined fish. Finally, you nodded to yourself, convinced of the necessity of the rod, before buying it, ferrying it home and nestling it safe amongst the others.

Then came the joys of discovery: that period of getting to know the rod, its characteristics and those little moments of surprise that come with this process. You learned how it would indicate the bites of the smallest fish, how it handled the sulky lunges of their larger cousins; you discovered how it responded when you wanted to hurl a bait out that bit further, and how it reacted when you suddenly wanted to dink one almost at your feet.

And then, when you really come to know the rod, you began pouring all those hours and experiences into it. Standing under the summer sun, crouched in the pouring sleet of winter, all the venues and sessions that slightly softened the tip action over the years, that helped the handle to become smoothed down by years of fish slime and friction from your hands as they held hard and struck into countless fish, playing them to the beach.

But now you're standing here, a little lost, a little annoyed and more than a bit bewildered at how your favourite rod, that extension of you that seemed a part of your own body after all these years, is now six inches shorter or has been transformed from a two-section rod into a three section rod. But there's also a very faint trace of something else beginning to push its way to the surface: a tiny, building hint of excitement.

TIME TO GO ROD SHOPPING!

In angling, aside from catching a lovely fish, there's little that matches the anticipation or the excitement of buying new tackle, especially something large like a rod or reel. Thinking back a few years to the last time when this happened to me in any significant way, the time I took delivery of my new rods as I made the switch to continental-style fishing, was something of a unique and interesting experience all-round. There was a time when I would, when in the market for a new pole, saunter into the local tackle shop, handle a few that I liked the look of, maybe chew the ear of the shop owner a little and browse through the standard fare – familiar British names like Daiwa and Greys as well as the stalwarts such as Abu and Shakespeare.

These days, though, the world is literally your oyster. While we British sea anglers were resting on our laurels, the continentals were stealing a march and developing the new generation of powerful, fine-tipped beachcasting rods that are now so commonplace. Perfectly adapted to fishing in places like the Mediterranean for small fish, these rods are finding an ever-expanding niche in this country as British sea anglers seek to modify their fishing style to adapt to the smaller amounts of big fish and the glut of small fish now prevalent in British waters.

In a semi-echo of the use of Spanish reed used in cane coarse rods in the 1960s and 1970s, one of these new wands arrived from Spain, the other from Italy and, lining them up against my existing crop of rods, their tips were reminiscent of the first small, bendy, flimsy spinning rod I owned as a child. I gulped. They made the tip of my 2 - 4oz bass rod look like a rough ground conger rod and, I must admit, they had me a little befuddled for a moment as they were like nothing I'd ever flexed in anger before. "Dear God, there's no way this thing will handle a double-shot of dogfish!" Was the thought that echoed through my brain time and again.

Like everything in fishing, though, given a couple of months and a light covering of scales and fish slime, they fitted right in alongside the others in the fishing shed and, best of all, were lighter and easier to transport than my old rods. Just as well really, as I often feel like I'm getting to that point where I'll need to be traded in for a newer model soon. Maybe I'll just settle for a new reel this time instead. ■



"Now you're standing here, a little lost, a little annoyed and more than a bit bewildered at how your favourite rod, that extension of you that seemed a part of your own body after all these years, is now six inches shorter or has been transformed from a two-section rod into a three-section rod"

THE ULTIMATE OUTBOARD MOTOR

SUZUKI

GET HOOKED

Discover the ultimate way of getting from A to B
Speak to your local Suzuki Dealer today or visit marine.suzuki.co.uk/fishing

Award-winning outboard motors chosen by champions. With Suzuki, you're guaranteed class-leading innovation, reliability and fuel efficiency as standard. Power your next adventure with the ultimate outboard motor.

YOUNG RODS

Sea Angler's celebration of the great angling achievements of its many younger readers

In association with



▲ **Alfie Lovegrove**, aged 12, from Somerset catching his first bass weighing 2lb 3oz on Axmouth shore in Devon. Alfie used a lure and was super pleased having had no success in all his past trips.



◀ Thirteen-year-old **James Bennett** caught this 9lb thornback ray from a mark on the Isle of Wight



▲ **Lois Lovell** was fishing with her father Matthew Lovell and had this fine 54cm bass.



◀ **Rory Kirby** caught this specimen 49cm ballan wrasse from the rocks in Connemara, County Galway, Ireland. He achieved the feat despite a broken arm!



▼ **Edmund Williams**, aged four, caught his first bass at Totland Bay, Isle of Wight, on a single hook trace full of ragworm. The fish was returned.



▲ **Sam Cross** caught this 52cm bass off the south coast of Anglesey with a Savage Gear Gravity Stick.



▲ **Kian Nicholson**, 15, from Clitheroe with a 64cm bass he caught on a lure while fishing in Lancashire.



▲ **Phoebe Olllett**, aged 13, caught this lovely 4lb 8oz bass from Walton-on-the-Naze on her dad's boat using ragworm.

£25 TACKLE VOUCHER WINNERS



Fishingmegastore.com awards a £25 voucher prize to each of two winners - the youngster with the best shore fish and another with the top boat catch. The winners can use the voucher to select tackle from Fishingmegastore.com which is based in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

■ Send your Young Rods entries by email to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED



Mark Fisher from Jarrow

FISH: 26lb 5oz cod **BAIT:** Mackerel
VENUE: Tyne and Wear **DATE:** 19/7/23

FOR ALL YOUR OTHER MISSION ACCOMPLISHED ENTRIES CHECK OUT THISA FACEBOOK PAGE



Stephen Eastwood, Cheshire

FISH: 350lb-400lb porbeagle shark **BAIT:** Mackerel **VENUE:** Celtic Deep **DATE:** 21/07/23



Craig Sagar, Cleckheaton

FISH: 18lb 6oz smoothhound **BAIT:** Mackerel
VENUE: Tunstal Beach **DATE:** 17/7/23



Robert Tharm, Lancashire

FISH: 20lb 10oz smoothhound **BAIT:** peeler crab
VENUE: Morecambe **DATE:** 21/7/23



Richard Russ, Swansea

FISH: 17lb 8oz smoothhound **BAIT:** Peeler crab



Mark, Sussex

FISH: 59lb tope **BAIT:** Mackerel
VENUE: Newhaven



Howard Cochrane, Essex

FISH: 18lb 3oz smoothhound **BAIT:** Lug and squid wrap **VENUE:** Dengie Flats, Essex
DATE: 02/7/23



Linda Murphy, West Sussex

FISH: 15lb 5oz smoothhound **BAIT:** Ragworm **VENUE:** Rustington beach
DATE: 4/6/23



Martin Rowlands, Derbyshire

FISH: 40lb 2oz tope **BAIT:** Mackerel
VENUE: Anglesey **DATE:** 23/7/23

YOUR FISHING CATCHES



Charlie Woof, Northallerton
FISH: 147lb common skate
BAIT: Mackerel **VENUE:** Oban **DATE:** 13/7/23



John Kerr, Wirral
FISH: 45lb tope
BAIT: Mackerel
VENUE: Prestatyn
DATE: 16/6/23



Connor Stagg, Cumbria
FISH: 9lb 7oz bass **VENUE:** Walney Island



Steve Furze, Torquay
FISH: 14lb bull huss **VENUE:** Start Point, Devon
DATE: 11/6/23



Jake Caldecott
FISH: 30lb tope **BAIT:** Mackerel
VENUE: Seaham



John Winstanley
FISH: 13lb 11oz smoothhound
BAIT: Peeler crab **VENUE:** Morecambe
DATE: 21/7/23



John Dean, West Sussex
FISH: 16lb pollack
BAIT: White sidewinder
VENUE: Caught mid Channel
DATE: 16/6/23



Aaron Myatt, Weymouth
FISH: 15lb 10oz blonde ray
BAIT: Sandeel and Bluey
VENUE: Chesil Beach

HOW TO ENTER

Email only to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk
Please supply these details: angler's name, age, address, telephone number, email, type of FISH, weight of FISH, where caught, DATE caught, BAIT/rig, whether caught from shore or boat, if from charter boat, give name of boat, port and skipper. Please state if the FISH was retained or returned.

Send us your entries and win some great prizes

- SHORE LURE OPTION: Solaris 4000 or 5000 reel, RRP: £60, Epixor 15-50g rod RRP: £80
- SHORE LURE OPTION: Solaris 4000 or 5000 reel, RRP: £60, Epixor 15-50g rod RRP: £80
- BOAT: Classic CLX, RRP: £60 Cortez Boat Rod, RRP: £90
- SHORE BAIT OPTION: DSA reel RRP: £60, Wave Power surf rod, RRP: £80

YOUR TARGETS...

Catch a FISH on this list at the weight or above in your region to qualify for the chance to win prizes in our Mission catch competition. To enter, send us the details requested above and email that information and your picture to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk.

	SHORE	BOAT
Bass	7lb	9lb
Black bream	2lb	3lb
Red bream	2lb	3lb
Couch's &		
Pandora's bream	1lb 8oz	1lb 8oz
Gilthead bream	4lb	4lb
Ray's bream	3lb	3lb
Brill	3lb	5lb
Bull huss	8lb	12lb
Cod	7lb	10lb
Conger	20lb	40lb
Dab & megrim	1lb	1lb
Dover/lemon sole	2lb	2lb
Flounder	2lb	2lb
Halibut	20lb	20lb
Ling	5lb	19lb
Mullet	4lb	5lb
Golden grey mullet	2lb	2lb
Plaice	2lb	4lb
Pollack/coal	6lb	12lb
Common skate	60lb	100lb
Blonde ray	12lb	17lb
Thornback ray	9lb	14lb
Small-eyed/undulate	7lb	11lb
Ray (other)	3lb	5lb
Sting/eagle ray	20lb	25lb
Smoothhound	10lb	14lb
Spurdog	7lb	11lb
Tope	27lb	35lb
Trigger	2lb	3lb
Turbot	10lb	12lb
Wrasse (ballan)	4lb	4lb
Wrasse (other)	1lb	1lb
Blue shark	-	60lb
Porbeagle/thresher	-	100lb

THE RULES...

- Only catches since June are eligible.
- We must see a picture of the fish.
- We may refuse an entry.
- Enter by email only (please include all of the information requested in How to Enter panel) to sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk
- Prizes as stated (Okuma reserves the right to send alternatives).
- No correspondence will be entered into.

MONTHLY WINNERS:

SHORE: Robert Tharm, Lancashire
BOAT: Stephen Eastwood, Cheshire



James Pritchard

FISH: 11lb smoothhound
BAIT: Ragworm and squid
VENUE: Eastern Solent
DATE: 21/7/23



Dominic Cragoe, Southwold

FISH: 10lb 8oz smoothhound
BAIT: Ragworm **VENUE:** Southwold Pier
DATE: 26/7/23



Kimberley Elvin, Bristol

FISH: 20lb 5oz conger **BAIT:** Mackerel and frozen black lug **VENUE:** Severn Beach
DATE: 28/5/23



Anthony Collins

FISH: 55lb top eel **BAIT:** Mackerel
VENUE: Newhaven



Mike Barlow, Eastbourne

FISH: 38lb top eel **BAIT:** Mackerel flapper
VENUE: Royal Sovereign Lighthouse, Eastbourne **DATE:** 9/7/23



Jason Lewis, Tonyrefail

FISH: 20lb 6oz conger **VENUE:** Barry, South Wales **DATE:** 2/7/23

ORDER ONLINE www.uttings.co.uk



NEXT DAY DELIVERY

Order before 2.30pm Monday to Friday & get your order **NEXT DAY** (Sat extra).

POSTAL ADDRESS

Uttings Ltd
PO Box 672, Norwich, NR3 2ZR

AKIOS 7 NEW RODS FOR 2023

2 PIECES	2 PIECES	2 PIECES	2 PIECES	4 PIECES	6 PIECES	6 PIECES
Nanotech Sport	Nanotech Sport	NanoTech Sport	NanoTech Sport	NanoTech Sport	NanoTech Sport	Vertron Super
Kayak Rod	Boat Rod	Popping Rod	Uptide Rod	Travel Spin Rod	Travel Beach Rod	Sport Combi Boat
5ft Sfn	2ft 2.5in - 6ft 10in	8ft 6in	9ft 6in	12ft 6in	9ft 6in - 7ft 6in	8ft 6in - 10ft 6in
12-25lb	12-25lb	60-160g	6-10oz	15-40lb	56-180lb	56-180lb
£59.99	20-30lb £79.99	£109.99	£99.99	£79.99	£149.99	£134.99

SHIMANO SURF RODS

Fishing rods for beach fishing

ALIVO

BX Tubular Tip Surf Rods

- Fast action composite blank
- Excellent combination of distance casting performance and value for money
- Shimano anti-tangle stainless steel Hardite guides
- Shimano DPS-type reel seat

RRP NOW

13ft 11in Tubular 225g £59.99

14ft 9in - Tubular 225g £69.99

£54.99

BEASTMASTER - Surf Rods

All models are fitted with a Shimano DPS reel seat and come with a custom casting grip handle for maximum grip pressure, even in wet conditions.

RRP NOW

4.25m Surf Hybrid J 200g 3 Piece £104.99

4.25m Surf Hybrid J 225g - Low Rider 3 Piece £104.99

4.25m Surf Tuber J 225g - 3 Piece £104.99

4.25m FX Surf Tuber J 225g - Low Rider 3 Piece £124.99

4.25m FX Surf Tele 150g 6 Piece £94.99

4.25m FX Surf Tele 170g 6 Piece £94.99

4.25m FX Surf Tele 200g 6 Piece £109.99

£99.99

NEXAVE - Surf Rods

Supplied with 2 Tips which are either tubular for extra distance casting or solid for a good bite detection.

Surf Lite / Rough Ground Rods RRP NOW

13ft Tubular - Lite 120g £134.99

13ft Tubular - Rough 225g £139.99

£98.99

SHIMANO SURFCASTING REELS

AERIES

Surf Casting Reel

RRP £114.99

£89.99

SPEDMASTER

H Surf Rod

RRP £169.99

£149.99

3 PIECES

Speedmaster 14000XTD

Big Pit Reel

RRP £169.99

£149.99

ULTEGRA XSD

5500 Surf

Reel / Big Pit Reel

RRP £174.99

£149.99

ULTEGRA XSD

5500 Surf

Reel

RRP £174.99

£149.99

ULTEGRA XSE

14000

XSD Reel

RRP £209.99

£189.99

ULTEGRA CI4+

14000 XSC

Reel

RRP £209.99

£259.99

SHIMANO SURFCASTING REELS

POWER AERO

Surf Casting Reel

RRP £184.99

£149.99

FLIEGEN 35SD

Reel

RRP £359.99

£399.99

CROSSCAST 33 - Surf Rods

Designed for distance beach work with a big fixed spool, over clean to medium ground. The built in carbon Hybrid Tip, ensures bite detection across the species mix, especially where smaller 'match winning' fish matter.

RRP NOW

13ft 10in Hybrid Tip 100-225g £125.99

14ft 10in Hybrid Tip 100-225g £140.99



FEEL the FURY

FURY FX420/450

CONTINENTAL ROD • 3 PIECE

The AKIOS FURY is sure to set new standards. The rod looks and behaves fantastically being tested for over 6 months. The AKIOS FURY rod series offers unbelievable value! Made from high modulus carbon fibre, incorporating a spliced tip. SeaGuide quality guides and reel seats, it is a true GEM, it's sure to become a best seller in the Surf market in the U.K. around Europe and further afield.

RRP NOW
14'/4.2m - 100-180g (4-6oz).....£149.99 £129
15'/4.5m - 100-180g (4-6oz).....£149.99 £129



A forward thinking company based in the UK. Developed by anglers for anglers who demand new, innovative and durable fishing tackle.

WHEN DISTANCE MATTERS
SHUTTLE

6 Models - from £189.99



NEW

£129.99

£129.99

£229.99

£79.99



NITRON F-15XP

FLAGSHIP MODEL
BEACH / SURF REEL

This new and improved version, the Nitron F-15XP, features an upgraded magnetic braking system and an upgraded drag mechanism allowing for bigger baits to be kept under control during the cast and bigger fish to be tamed.

- UPGRADED Akios QUADRO Magnetic Braking System for even greater casting control
- UPGRADED Drag System
- EVA Ball Power Handle
- Superfast 6.2:1 Retrieve Ratio
- Powersafe Precision Machined Bronze/Brass Gearing
- Colossal 10x4mm Main Gear
- Supersized Smid Hardened Steel Spindle

£259

SONIK
BACK IN BLACKBEACH
BOSS

DOMINATOR XS

BLACK
RRP NOW
11ft 6in - 2-4oz MFS £109.99 £99
13ft - 4-6oz MFS £119.99 £89
14ft - 5-7oz MFS £129.99 £99

MATCH 13ft - 4-6oz MFS £149.99 £115
SPORT 13ft - 4-6oz MFS £159.99 £119

Snowbee NEW

DEEP BLUE² BOAT RODS

Over the years, these rods have been steadily upgraded, but fans of the original Deep Blue range need not worry, as the latest Deep Blue models, have an even lighter, crispier action than their predecessors! Finished in the same lustrous deep blue, with subtle cross-whipping and a choice of black or white tips, these rods are fitted with stainless steel rings to prevent corrosion. Accurately rated to IGFA line classes and at 7ft 7ins they offer the ideal length for the serious boat angler and include a model to suit all fishing situations.

10201 7ft 7in IGFA 8lbs Class Butt Cap. £139.99 £119
10209 7ft 7in IGFA 8lbs Class S-Flex Butt Cap. £139.99 £119
10202 7ft 7in IGFA 12lbs Class Butt Cap. £139.99 £119
10205 7ft 7in IGFA 12lbs Class S-Flex Butt Cap. £139.99 £119
10203 7ft 7in IGFA 20lbs Class Gimbal. £149.99 £129
10204 7ft 7in IGFA 30lbs Class Gimbal. £149.99 £129



Butt Cap

Gimbal

okuma
INSPIRED FISHING
BIG GAME REELSMAKAIRA®
MK-30 II
Big Game Reel
£499MAKAIRA®
MK-50 II
Big Game Reel
£559MAKAIRA®
MK-50W II
Big Game Reel
£569MAKAIRA®
MK-80 II
Big Game Reel
£895

DAIWA BOAT REELS



Sealine Sloop

Boat reel

from £89.99

Fishing reels for sea fishing

18 Saltist

Boat reel

from £239.99

Saltist

Level wind reel

from £239.99

20 Saltiga LD

Single & 2 speed boat reels

from £379

20 Saltiga (G)

Saltwater spinning reel

from £899

DAIWA BOAT RODS

Kenzaki Super Boat Rods - 2, 3 & 4 piece - 13 Models
RRP £190 from £159.99

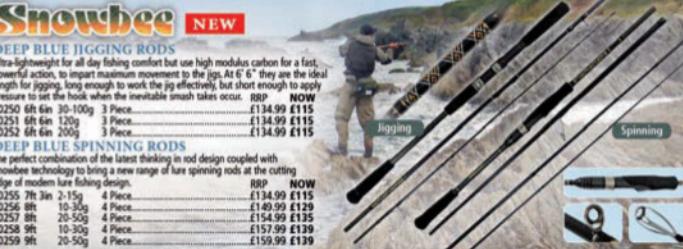
Seahunter Z Boat Rods - 2 piece - 4 Models.....from £59
Saltist Jigging/Popping Boat Rods - 2 piece - 3 Models.....from £169
Tournament Boat Rods - 2 piece - 5 Models.....RRP £215 from £159

Team Daiwa X Boat Rods - 2 piece - 3 Models.....RRP £170 from £129

FURY FX420/450

CONTINENTAL ROD • 3 PIECE

AKIOS BEACHCASTERS - 2023 COLLECTION



Vanquish FC

MGL SERIES

Pinnacle of lightweight engineering for finesse anglers seeking the ultimate in performance.

The Vanquish is equipped with the lightest Magnumite Rotor. Perfect balance, lightness and low inertia rotation, produces exceptional performance and awareness.

1000, 2000, 2500, 3000, 4000, 5000

11 Models from £449.50

SHIMANO

Beyond Lightness



DAIWA

22 EXIST

The future of Daiwa Spinning Reels is AIRDRIVE DESIGN. By reducing the weight of rotor, spool & ball assembly, a lighter rotation is achieved. The effortless rotation allows the angler to feel the true joy of trouble free function. This new chapter starts with 22 EXIST.

22 Exist PC LT 2500D G 22 Exist LT 4000D G
22 Exist LT 2000D-P G 22 Exist LT 5000D-C G
22 Exist LT 3000D G

RRP £850-£900

5 Models Available - See website for latest prices



DAIWA

BASS LURE RODS

Fishing rods for sea bass fishing

Sandstorm

Bass Spinning Rods

- Premium Carbon Blanks
- Fixed Spool DIPS Reel Seat
- Seaguide Deep Driven Frame Guides with Aluminium Oxide Ring
- Split EVA Grip Handle

11ft 6in 28-84g..... RRP NOW £135 from £110

SALTIST - Bass Spinning Rods

- HVF High Volume Fibre
- X4S Technology

RRP NOW

8ft	10-35g	£185 £139
8ft 6in	10-35g	£190 £145
9ft	10-35g	£195 £149

SALTIST - Spinning Rods

10ft 14-60g..... 11ft 6in 28-84g.....

RRP NOW

£170 £129

10ft 14-60g..... 11ft 6in 28-84g.....

RRP NOW

£170 £129

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RRP NOW

G-Loomis

BASS LURE RODS

UK
APPOINTED
DEALER**IMX-PRO MAG BASS** CASTING RODS

Bass casting rods designed for anglers that prefer the "Classic" Mag Bass actions. Full cork grips and Fuji reel seats with Fuji K-frame guides provide positive grip and balance and weight, incredible control. Incredible weight, excellent balance and unbelievable power and strength!

IMX Pro Mag Bass 6ft 6in 7-18g 1 Piece...£289.99

IMX Pro Mag Bass 6ft 7-21g 1 Piece...£289.99

**IMX-PRO BASS** SPINNING JIG RODS

Bass casting rods designed for anglers that prefer the "Classic" Mag Bass actions. Full cork grips and Fuji reel seats with Fuji K-frame guides provide positive grip and balance and weight, incredible control. Incredible weight, excellent balance and unbelievable power and strength!

IMX Pro Mag Bass 6ft 2-9g 1 Piece...£289.99

IMX Pro Mag Bass 7ft 4-10g 1 Piece...£289.99

**WESTIN®**
SCANDINAVIA

W3 SEABASS 2nd GENERATION
The W3 SeaBass 2nd is a super-fast and long-casting powerhouse that meets the demands of the modern sea bass angler. These rods are packed with power, and due to the premium Torayca® carbon fibers, you still get a true lightweight feeling when fishing, fish, and detecting even the most audacious bites. Use it from the bank or boat, the W3 SeaBass 2nd will get the job done no matter the situation.

**HIGHLY
RECOMMENDED**

SAVAGE GEAR It's a savage world

SALTWATER LURE REELS

SG58

Built with a strong, lightweight aluminum body and a Carbon Reinforced Composite rotor, the SG58 is built for maximum performance time and time again. Features 6+1 sealed steel ball bearings, high-performance carbon drag system and our proprietary Dura Grease - all which combine to help make the reel saltwater resistant.

• 9 •
Reinforced Composite rotor.

8 Models available - 4000, 5000, 6000, 8000, 10000, 14000, 14000H, 18000 RRP £154.99-£189.99 from £89.99

SAVAGE GEAR It's a savage world

LOTS OF REDUCTIONS THIS MONTH...

Working with Henry Gilbey, Savage have produced an amazing new range of soft plastics. - Read his blog on our website

Gravity Stick Minikit

7 Colours

Gravity Stick Minikit

7 Colours - £8.99

SAVAGE GEAR It's a savage world

LURE FISHING NETS

Rubber Mesh

Medium

Large

Pro Fineze Floating Landing Nets

The ideal Bass net for fishing off the rocks or on the beach - designed for catching fish and fish care - great for catch and release.

Bottle and Net Clip

Strong ABS quick clip. L: 14.5cm W: 20g RRP £6.99 £4.99

Medium...£24.99 £19.99
Large...£31.99 £26.99
XL...£79.99 £69.99
XL...£79.99 £69.99
XL...£49.99 £44.99

SAVAGE GEAR It's a savage world

BASS FISHING PRODUCTS

Waterproof Rollup Rucksack

Waterproof Rollup Bag

Specialist Rucksack

Shield Gloves

ProTec Gloves

Alu Pro Pliers

Rollup Pouch

Zipper Wallet 1

Zipper Wallet 2

Performance Winter Boot

Flip Wallet Rig & Lure Bags

Rig & Lure Flip Wallet

Lure Boxes from £2.99

SAVAGE GEAR It's a savage world

WATERPROOF JACKET

Salt Pack-Lite Packable Jacket

Dark Grey Melange

RRP £129.99 NOW £99

Waterproof Performance Jacket

Black Ink / Grey

RRP £129.99 NOW £99

Waterproof Rollup Rucksack

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Rollup Pouch

Zipper Wallet 1

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SEPTEMBER 2023

TOP TARGET SPECIES PREDICTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER

SURF BASS

September heralds one of the best periods of the year for shore bassing. The first of the autumn gales and the bigger tides, plus the onset of autumn spur the fish on to feed heavily, and with the chance of a bigger than average fish.

TIDE TALK

Bass have a powerful body profile ideally suited to feeding in fast water and heavy surf conditions. This rightly tells us that the bigger tides are the ones to fish. These occur from the 29th August and stay with us until the 5th September. The next tides fall between the 13th and the 20th, and again from the 27th to the 30th September. The rising tides prior to the very big springs tend to fish best, with the biggest tides not always so consistent. As the biggest tides pass over, catches will also fade away.

Low water can be a good time to start with the first two hours likely to produce the most bites. The bass can be within 30-yards of the tide line too. The middle hours of the

flood can be hit and miss on many beaches, especially when near estuaries, but the 90-minutes before high water can again see fish caught. Bass can also show on the ebb but tend to push out quickly as the tide flow picks up, plus they will be at longer range during the ebb.

Good spots to fish are the ends of beaches, the sandy gullies running the length of the beach and any areas of rougher ground.

A wind off the sea up to force 4 or 5 is ideal, and the best tides are when low water falls and then floods in darkness. A good surf is when the surf tables are like wide steps lifting in front of you. These conditions maximise the numbers of bass in the surf. Shorter, higher surfs are less good.

TACTICS

A 2-4oz bass rod, 6500 multiplier with 15lb mono and 30lb leader, or 5000 sized fixed spool reel loaded with 20lb braid and a 50lb braid leader are good for lighter seas. Some anglers fish 30lb braid straight through. Heavier seas require 12 - 14ft



4-6oz beachcasters, reels like the PENN 525 and 18lb mono with a 60lb leader, or a 7000/8000 fixed spool loaded with 30lb braid and an 80lb braid leader. Use a clipped down 1-hook rig with a size 3/0 hook.

Baits to use are lugworm, ragworm, mackerel heads, whole squid, crab and combination baits.

HOTSPOTS

English Channel, Cornish beaches, Bristol Channel, all the Welsh coast, Lancashire. In Ireland, Wicklow, Waterford, Cork and Kerry beaches offer the best fishing.

OTHER POSSIBLE SPECIES

Cod, huss, rays.



BOATTURBOT

Turbot are a prized target for offshore anglers but are not always the easiest of fish to catch, plus they may only feed for short periods during any given tide. The boat drift speed allied to wind direction and tide flow is critical for good catches.

TIDE TALK

Ideal conditions are light winds with a reduced tide flow. This keeps the boat and baits over the sandbanks for longer helping to increase catches. The smaller neap tides offer a slower tide flow and these fall from the 7th of September to the 11th, then from the 22nd to the 25th. Turbot can be caught on slightly bigger tides, especially in areas where tide flow is naturally reduced, but the dates given are the optimum tides.

Turbot like some tide flow, so either side of low water and high-water slack sees fewer bites. Expect bites to increase one hour into the flood but be best during the middle hours when the flow is strongest. Turbot will also feed down the outgoing tide, but catches are normally not as good, nor as prolonged as those on the flood.

There is a theory that turbot move over low water slack swapping from one sandbank to the opposite side to face the changing tide. However, it's more likely that the fish move up off the banks on to the top of the sandbanks to intercept sandeel resulting in

the odd fish being caught before dropping back to the steeper sides.

Ideal weather conditions occur when low water and the first of the flood see a cloud front move in reducing the light level travelling through the water column. Add in a wind direction opposing the tidal flow and this will slow the boats drift even more and again helps keep the baits over the productive ground for longer.

TACTICS

A 20/30lb rod with a multiplier holding 300-metres of 30lb braid plus backing covers most situations. Add a leader twice the length of the rod from 30lb Fluorocarbon to reduce seabed abrasion and hide the braid from the fish. Use long 30lb Fluorocarbon flowing traces up to 6ft with a size 4/0

hook. Choose leads just heavy enough to keep in contact with the seabed and lift the lead occasionally to lift the bait for added movement.

Thin full or half fillets of mackerel, especially the white belly strips work best as they have more movement and simulate a swimming fish. Add strips of squid for even more attraction during lighter tide runs.

HOTSPOTS

Sandbanks off Dorset, Sussex, South Wales and Ports in Devon and Cornwall. West coast of Scotland. In Ireland, Cork, Kerry, Galway, Mayo and especially Donegal.

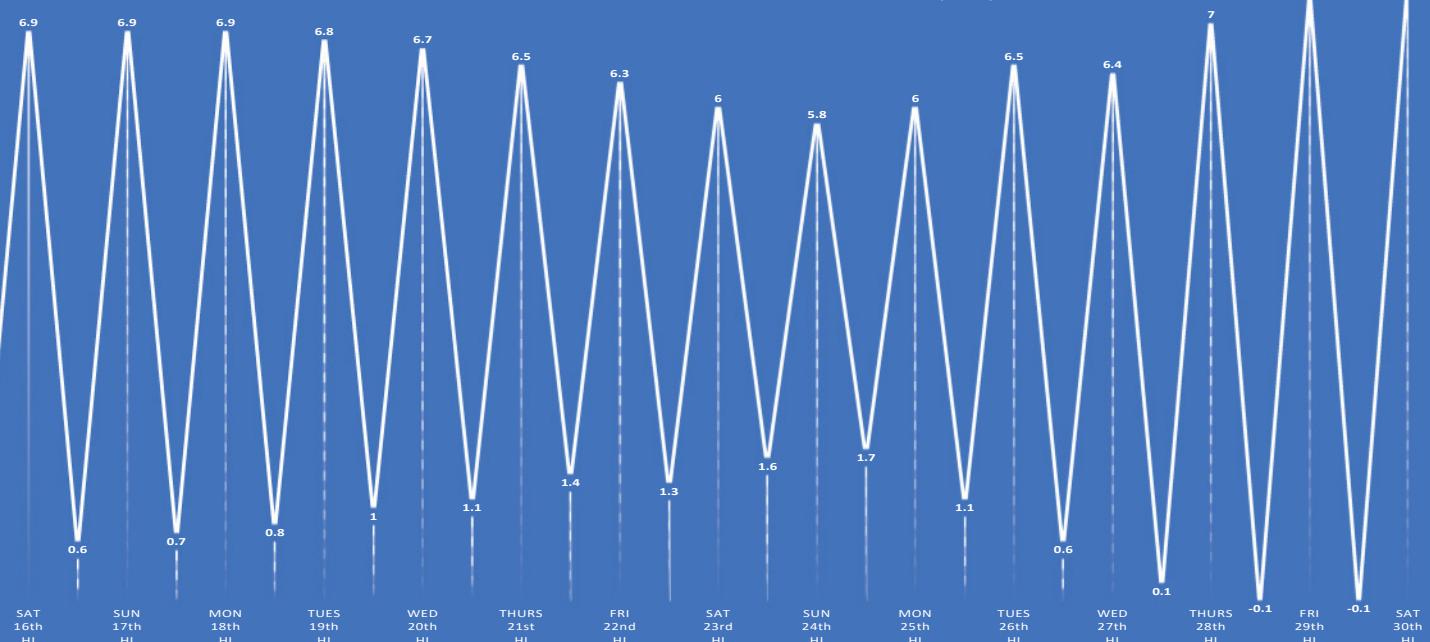
OTHER POSSIBLE SPECIES

Brill, rays, huss.



HEIGHT (M)

* Heights shown are for London Bridge





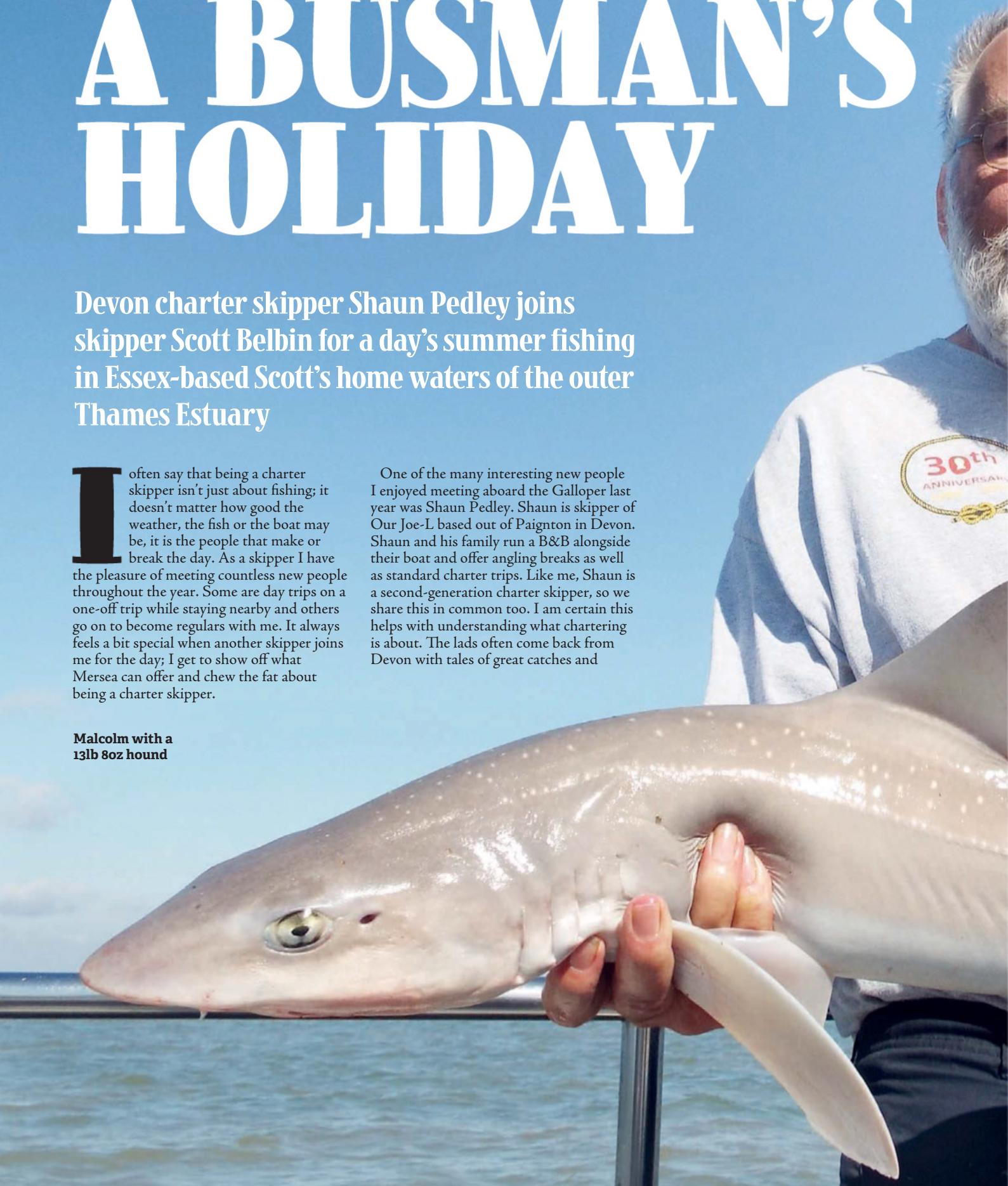
A BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

Devon charter skipper Shaun Pedley joins skipper Scott Belbin for a day's summer fishing in Essex-based Scott's home waters of the outer Thames Estuary

I often say that being a charter skipper isn't just about fishing; it doesn't matter how good the weather, the fish or the boat may be, it is the people that make or break the day. As a skipper I have the pleasure of meeting countless new people throughout the year. Some are day trips on a one-off trip while staying nearby and others go on to become regulars with me. It always feels a bit special when another skipper joins me for the day; I get to show off what Mersea can offer and chew the fat about being a charter skipper.

Malcolm with a 13lb 8oz hound

One of the many interesting new people I enjoyed meeting aboard the Galloper last year was Shaun Pedley. Shaun is skipper of Our Joe-L based out of Paignton in Devon. Shaun and his family run a B&B alongside their boat and offer angling breaks as well as standard charter trips. Like me, Shaun is a second-generation charter skipper, so we share this in common too. I am certain this helps with understanding what chartering is about. The lads often come back from Devon with tales of great catches and



A large white shark is being held by a person's hand, showing its long body and dorsal fin against a clear blue sky.

prizes from the Torbay Angling Festival. In addition to this I had also heard about his impressive rowing exploits including holding the record for being the youngest person to row the Atlantic twice! At least if the fishing was slow, we would have plenty to talk about.

I had already heard lots about Shaun from several of the anglers who had fished with both of us over the years. In fact, it was a group of Shaun's regulars that organised the trip for him to join them while he was visiting Essex. The lads had already enjoyed some very productive days with me on the hounds and bass earlier in the year and hoped to show Shaun some of what Essex sea fishing has to offer. The weather was spot on with a light south-westerly breeze dropping away to nothing later in the day. ▶



It was no surprise, we had wall to wall sunshine as one might expect on Essex's sunshine coast.

Tony and Malcolm had arranged the trip; they have enjoyed many angling breaks with Shaun and his family-run B&B over the years. Tony had arranged for Shaun to bring up some peeler crab from Devon to add to our ever-growing bait arsenal including squid, ragworm and small hard back shore crabs. With the tide behind us it was only a short steam to our first mark of the day. We anchored our first mark in around 2m of water for the last of the tide. In this shallow water casting away from the boat is necessary, something that isn't so common in Devon but Shaun didn't take long to get his eye in. He was soon sending baits towards the horizon along with the rest of the lads. The baits hadn't been out long



"The lads had already enjoyed some very productive days with me on the hounds and bass earlier in the year and hoped to show Shaun some of what Essex sea fishing has to offer"

when the first rod went off. After a great scrap in such shallow water, I netted a nice little smoothhound to start our day. We fished this mark over the turn of the tide when it is often at its best and a few more fish came out.

However, by the time the tide had turned it was clear the fish weren't here in the numbers I hoped for and weed was becoming a pain. So, we had a short move to another mark in slightly deeper water, around 5m, where the fish should have just started to feed. As expected, there was far less weed here and once again it wasn't long before our baits were being nailed by those hard fighting hounds. After a lot of success earlier in the season the lads were quite happy to fish hard back crabs for bait. I like these when I know the hounds are in reasonable numbers and the stamp of fish is good. These need to be fresh though as frozen or stinky dead hardbacks crabs won't work. True to form these hard backs, along with the much-converted Devonian peeler crabs, worked wonders. We soon had some better smoothhounds aboard, Malcolm managed the best one at 13lb 8oz after it gave him a tour of the boat on its way in.

With loads of room onboard, the lads could easily fish two rods each. I encouraged them to try the other baits too and so some



rods were baited with ragworm and squid cocktail. This is a great summer standby bait around the greater Thames Estuary which can pick up most available species. The different bait accounted for several summer thornback rays along with more hounds, an eel and a bass for Matt. We had nearly as many thornbacks as we had hounds by the end of the day. This was a sign that the best of the summer fishing would soon be over as the rays replace the hounds for autumn. Luckily Shaun wasn't left out of the action with several fish including a new PB hound for his efforts. It's always nice to see somebody catch a PB on my boat and even better when it's a fellow skipper! I know there are many personal best held aboard the Our Joe-L too, and hopefully one day I will find time to try and better one of mine.

TACKLE AND TACTICS

This kind of fishing is pretty simple and just requires pretty standard tackle for summer fishing around here. Personally, I will try to use a lighter outfit than I do offshore. My own outfit consists of a heavy spinning rod capable of casting up to 5oz. matched with a decent fixed spool loaded with 45lb braid mainline. This is finished off with a running ledger, a 4-5ft 55lb mono trace and a decent 3/0 hook. I use both circles and J hooks for summer fishing but prefer a circle where hounds and bass are the target. Around 5oz break-out leads will suffice and such shallow water is where boat casting is necessary to get the best results.

BAITS FOR SUMMER FISHING

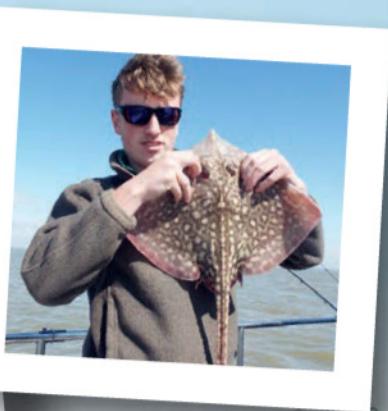
Of course, this will depend on what you are targeting. If targeting smoothhounds then crab baits are normally the best. Peeler crab can excel at times, particularly

Matt with a hound



early in the season. They don't come cheap but half a crab bound up with elastic is enough to tempt a big hound. Hermits are great bait too; they have probably accounted for more hounds than anything else around the Thames Estuary. I am only interested in these when they are fresh though and don't rate dead/frozen hermit. Hermits have been increasingly hard to come by over the last few years so we have turned to other baits with success. Hard back shore crabs are one of these baits, hooked up through

the rear leg socket and out through the top of the shell. These need to be kept fresh as stinky dead ones don't seem to work. Last but not least one of my favourite summer baits is ragworm tipped with squid. This is a very accessible and readily available cocktail which will attract just about any of our summer species. I have seen anything from big hounds and stingray through to bass, skate, eels and even small tope come out on this bait. Although numbers of each species may vary, this kind of mixed catch is available from late April until October depending on water temperature. ■



Tony plays a hound



DOUBLE COMBO SUMMER OFFER

SUPER SAVINGS!

£6.99 P&P (free over £50)*

This month we are offering readers the chance to get your hands on two great offers from our partners at Fishing Megastore

ONLY £29.99



Get amongst the summer mackerel with the Fisheagle Mackerel combo 11ft rod and reel for an amazing £29.99 (RRP £69.98).

The Mackerel combo includes an 11ft length rod and a matched reel supplied with pre-loaded line. It's the perfect setup for casting feathers from the beach or chucking a float out from the pier. The sturdy fixed spool reel comes preloaded with quality mono and a capacity of 315 yards of 0.35mm line.

ONLY £39.99



If you are going afloat this summer the Fisheagle Bowline Boat Combo is the ideal set-up at an affordable price. The seven foot 20-30lb two-piece, glass-tipped, all-round boat rod will handle mixed fishing for a wide variety of species wherever you are fishing. The rod comes paired with a 300L multiplier reel preloaded with mono all for the amazing price of just £39.99 (RRP £89.98). The right-hand wind reel features a level wind and an easily adjustable star drag. Don't miss out on these two great offers!

THREE EASY WAYS TO ORDER

1. LOG ON to the link gac.fishing/00205SA
2. CALL 0141 212 8880 and quote 00205SA
3. BY POST Glasgow Angling Centre, Unit 1, 29 Saracen ST, Glasgow G22 5HT, quote 00205SA

* UK Mainland only. Please ask for rates beyond



"FISH ON!"

The 'Bluey'

A firm favourite on the continent for the specimen hunter. We love this colour as a midwater lure. Works best in clear water with lots of sunlight. Deadly for Bass.



RRP
£9.99

The 'Wakasagi'

Our new favourite colour for 2023. Shimmer skin purple belly finish, matched with a natural sandeel back pattern. Deadly when worked in clear water over a sandy bottom.

Available in 4" - 10gm - 4pkt and 6" - 25gm - 3pkt

AVAILABLE SUMMER 2023
FROM ALL GOOD TACKLE SHOPS
sidewinderlures.co.uk

BOOKING NOW WITH ANGLERS WORLD HOLIDAYS

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NEW HOSTED FISHING ADVENTURES

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ALL TRIPS FULLY ABTA BONDED
FOR YOUR FINANCIAL PROTECTION



High Demand
Booking Now



Talk to us about Soroya Norway 2024 & 2025

In Soroya, you'll be fishing with Kevin for some of the world's biggest cod. Located at Norway's crown, Soroya is an island that also enthrals visitors with its breathtaking natural beauty.

Talk to us about Rodrigues Island 2024 & 2025

Join Kevin at Rodrigues Island in the Indian Ocean, east of Mauritius - targeting big Dogtooth Tuna, Yellow Fin Tuna, GT's, Marlin, Wahoo, Grouper and Coral Trout.

Talk to us about New Zealand 2024 & 2025

Join Kevin in New Zealand - fishing the world-famous Three Kings targeting the world's biggest Yellow Tail King Fish, Bass, Puka, Blue nose, Mako Shark and Swordfish.



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PENN Fathom LD Lever Drag Multiplier



Offshore fishing is challenging enough with overly-aggressive fish determined to keep anglers at a disadvantage. The PENN® Fathom™ Lever Drag reels take the advantage away from the fish and gives the edge to the angler.

Sale

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
PE1678	30	235yds/50lb	£259.99	£150.00

PENN Fathom II Multiplier Reels

- Full Metal Body and side plates
- Fast Gear Access Side Plate
- HT-100™ carbon fibre drag washers
- Line Capacity Rings



CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
PE1925	Levelwind 15 LW LH	345m/0.35mm	£249.99	£125.00
PE1971	Star Drag II30 SD P	400m/0.49mm	£229.99	£130.00

Sealine Slosh Multipliers

The SL20SH and SL30SH are two top drawer performers boasting powerful, high speed gearing. Nicknamed 'Slosh' by their many fans around UK coastlines, they are excellent for all shore work, up-tiding and a variety of down tide boat fishing.



CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
DW0631	SL20SH	250m/20lbs	£125.00	£95.00
DW0633	SL30SH	300m/20lbs	£125.00	£95.00

Shakespeare Agility Surf Reels



Purpose built for UK beach fishing, Shakespeare's Agility Surf range are designed to handle saltwater use, and are thoroughly tested for reliability. Features a large capacity, distance casting spool, matched with a smooth drag system.

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
SP3392	70	20lbs/240yds	£67.99	£40.00
SP3391	80	15lbs/360yds	£69.99	£40.00

SONIK SKS Black Surf Reel

The Sonik SKS8000 Surf reel is a full-sized surf reel which has been designed to meet the requirements of the UK beach angler. The spool design gives smooth long casts and the large handle helps to speed gear and fish back to the beach.



CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
S00481	8000	220yds/20lb	£49.99	£45.00

Shakespeare Agility Saltwater FD Reel

- 5+1 Bearing System
- Saltwater resistant
- Aluminium main spool
- Large Diameter Bail Wire
- Safe line clips
- Aluminium handles
- Comfortable EVA handle knob



Save £19.99!

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	NOW
SP4009	60	200m/20lb	£59.99	£40.00

FISHEAGLE Expert MKII 2pc Flotation Suit

The latest edition of the best selling Expert 2-piece Flotation suit is state of the art and has been produced and conforms to ISO 12402-5 & 12402-6 regulations. This update has all the functions and quality that you are used too, but with a modern touch and extra safety features. Bib and Brace trousers that are certified as a 50 Newton Buoyancy Aid having been specially designed to elevate the top half of your body when in water.

The suit features a reflective tape for night safety, a stitched-in belt with ITW Nexus buckle and a CE 394 whistle. Made from a light, wind and water-resistant fabric, they provide comfort for any inclement trips day or night as well as safety in the water.

RRP £139.99

OUR PRICE

£109.99

CODE

SIZE

RE0852	S
RE0853	M
RE0854	L
RE0855	XL
RE0856	2XL



**BEST
SELLER**

stillwater Boat & Shore Polar PVC Wellington Boots & Lining

The rugged PVC construction keeps out the water, while the removable fleece liner keeps the heat in.

ALL SIZES

RRP: £29.99

£19.99

CODE	SIZE
RE0509	6
RE0511	7
RE0512	8
RE0513	9
RE0515	10/10.5
RE0516	11
RE0517	12

BEACHCASTER & SURF RODS

SONIK Black Shore Rods

BEST SELLER

SALE

The SKS Black Shore Rods bring the world of top end surf rods to a whole new accessible level.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
SO0244	12ft	4-6oz	2	£79.99	£71.99
SO0245	13ft	4-6oz	2	£89.99	£80.99
SO0246	14ft	5-7oz	2	£99.99	£89.99

Designed and made by Daiwa these outstanding quality and performance delivers way above the price point.

The best starter or combo rod you could possibly ask for.

D Wave Surf Rods

The strong and powerful blank will ensure you of great casting distance, while the sensitive tip gives perfect bite detection. The rod is equipped with one-piece stainless steel Dura-guides that provide ultimate durability since these guides are especially designed without an inner-ceramic.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
PE2150	Surf	14ft	100-250g	3	£75.00	
PE2151	Surf	15ft	100-250g	3	£75.00	
PE2152	Beach	13ft	113-200g	3	£75.00	
PE2114		7ft	10-40g	2	£84.99	
PE2115		8ft	20-40g	2	£94.99	
PE2116		8ft	80-120g	2	£99.99	
PE2117		9ft	30-60g	2	£99.99	
PE2118		9ft	100-150g	2	£109.99	
PE2119		10ft	20-80g	2	£109.99	

BASS & SPINNING RODS

PENN Wrath Spinning Combos

Carbon spinning rods that are matched with the great PENN Wrath reels.

CODE	LENGTH	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
PE2301	14ft	50-200g	3	£110.00	
PE2302	14ft	100-225g	3	£139.99	

Catch More Fish Spin Kit

The Catch More Fish 2 Spin Kit is ideal for beginners and offers great value for money. The kit includes a 9ft rod with a pre-spooled reel and a tackle box full of terminal items to get you started.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	PRICE
SP4151	9ft	40-80g	2	£54.99	£40.00

Excursion Bass Spinning Rods

A custom PU grip enables these rods to be used in whatever conditions are thrown at you, especially on the shoreline. A white blank offers unparalleled bite indication and actions and lengths to cover all in-shore opportunities.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	RRP	NOW
SP4201	8ft	Med 8-30g	2	£44.99	£20.00
SP4200	8ft	Med 15-40g	2	£44.99	£20.00
SP4202	8ft	Heavy 30-60g	2	£44.99	£20.00
SP3940	Boat	7ft	20lb	2	£40.00
SP3941	Boat	7ft	30lb	2	£40.00
SP3945	Boat	7ft	20-30lb	4	£50.00
SP3944	Braid	8ft	20-30lb	2	£50.00

PENN Squadron II Surf Rod

Offering exceptional value for money, the PENN Squadron II series features modern sporting blanks actions designed to achieve high performance in both fishing and casting.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
PE1809	Surf	12ft	113-170g	2	£50.00

PENN Tidal Surfcasting Rods

Tidal stands for everything you need for surfcasting: Super strong but lightweight and responsive 30T carbon blanks that are designed to have the best distance properties.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
PE2301	14ft	50-200g	3	£110.00
PE2302	14ft	100-225g	3	£139.99
PE2303	14ft	100-250g	3	£139.99
PE2304	14ft	100-300g	3	£139.99

Agility 2 Boat Salt Rod Series

These rods feature lightweight, fast actioned, yet powerful blanks designed to maximise bite detection.

CODE	MODEL	LEN	CASTS	PCS	NOW
SP3940	Boat	7ft	20lb	2	£40.00
SP3941	Boat	7ft	30lb	2	£40.00
SP3945	Boat	7ft	20-30lb	4	£50.00
SP3944	Braid	8ft	20-30lb	2	£50.00

VAN STAAL X Series Spinning Reels **SALE**



Van Staal VS X-SERIES Bailess Spinning Reels are the surf spinning reels you have been waiting for! Van Staal took what is considered by most to be the best surf fishing reel on the planet and made it better!

- Fully-machined and sealed waterproof aluminium body
- Sealed waterproof drag system
- MicroClick drag tuning accuracy
- Heavy-duty stainless steel spiral-bevel main gear

MODEL	CAPACITY	BLACK	NOW	SILVER	NOW
100	350yds/20lb	-	-	ZE1679	£400
150	440yds/30lb	ZE1680	£350	ZE1681	£400
200	500yds/30lb	ZE1682	£400	ZE1683	£350
250	600yds/50lb	ZE1684	£350	ZE1685	£400
275	400yds/80lb	ZE1686	£350	ZE1687	£350

MITCHELL Bluewater R Reels

Perfect for newcomers to the sport, youngsters or even anglers who are looking for a quality spare surf fishing reel. The Mitchell Blue Water R Reel offers fantastic quality and performance at an excellent price point.

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	PRICE
PU5521	9000	290m/0.40mm	£29.99	£20.00
PU5522	8000	370m/0.40mm	£29.99	£20.00
PU5773	6000	200m/0.35mm	£29.99	£20.00

Berkley Whiplash 8 Strand Braid

A perfectly braided 8 carrier 100% PE superline.

DIA.	B/S	GREEN	CRYSTAL
0.25mm	87lb	-	PU6228
0.16mm	45lb	PU6245	PU6225
0.14mm	42lb	PU6244	PU6224
0.12mm	38lb	PU6243	PU6223
0.10mm	32lb	PU6242	PU6222
0.08mm	25lb	PU6241	PU6221

ALL MODELS
RRP: £47.99
£25

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AVAILABLE ON
OUR WEBSITE!

WESTIN Salty Lures

This bestselling Westin lure has it all.

COLOUR	7CM / 12G	9CM / 18G	11CM / 26G
Canned Sardine	WN2086	WN2104	WN2122
GFR	WN2088	WN2106	WN2124
Dotted Sardine	WN2089	WN2107	WN2125
Diamond Thief	WN2090	WN2108	WN2126
Pattegrisen	WN2093	WN2111	WN2129
3D Yellow Ayu	WN3177	WN3184	WN3191
3D Brown Headlight	WN3178	WN3185	WN3192
3D Sparkling Herring	WN3179	WN3186	WN3193
UV Hottie Pearl	WN3180	WN3187	WN3194
PRICE	£5.99	£6.50	£6.99

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Fighter 300L Multiplier with Mono



- Very strong and reliable ball bearing Level-wind Multiplier
- 3.8:1 Gear Ratio
- Pre-Loaded with mono
- Easily adjustable star drag
- Non-slip handle
- Right hand wind

CODE	CAPACITY	RRP	PRICE
RE0839	20lb/310yds	£34.99	£24.99

PENN

Rival Level Wind Multiplier



- Lightweight graphite frame and sideplates
- Auto-engaging gears
- Marine-grade bronze alloy main gear
- Machine cut brass pinion gear
- HT-100™ carbon fiber drag washers

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	PRICE
PE2059	30 LW LC	30lb/370yds	£129.99	£65.00

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Guerilla Beachcaster Rods



A well priced continental rod that packs a punch at a price everybody can afford. Ideally suited to fishing clean beaches when targeting species such as flounder, whiting, plaice and dogfish.

CODE	LENGTH	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
TX7658	13ft 6	150-225g	2	£92.99
TX7656	13ft 7	100-200g	3	£91.99
TX7657	14ft 7	100-200g	3	£97.99

MITCHELL Bluewater R Reels

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PU5522	8000	370m/0.40mm	£29.99	£20.00
PU5773	6000	200m/0.35mm	£29.99	£20.00

FISHEAGLE

Agility HRF/LRF Rods



A new concept rod designed to work small lures and jig heads up to 40gms from boats targeting smaller ground dwelling species such as wrasse, small pollack, cod, coalfish, gurnards, bream, plaice, haddock and whiting.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
SP3484	6ft 7	0.5-7g	2	£25.00
SP3485	7ft	5-15g	2	£30.00

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
SP3948	8ft	10-20g	2+2	£30.00
SP3949	8ft 6	20-40g	2+2	£30.00

Berkley Whiplash 8 Strand Braid

A perfectly braided 8 carrier 100% PE superline.

DIA.	B/S	GREEN	CRYSTAL
0.25mm	87lb	-	PU6228
0.16mm	45lb	PU6245	PU6225
0.14mm	42lb	PU6244	PU6224
0.12mm	38lb	PU6243	PU6223
0.10mm	32lb	PU6242	PU6222
0.08mm	25lb	PU6241	PU6221

ALL MODELS
RRP: £47.99
£25

FULL RANGE
AVAILABLE ON
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WESTIN Salty Lures

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Canned Sardine	WN2086	WN2104	WN2122
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3D Sparkling Herring	WN3179	WN3186	WN3193
UV Hottie Pearl	WN3180	WN3187	WN3194
PRICE	£5.99	£6.50	£6.99

FISHEAGLE

Saracen Mackerel Outfit

U117FSH

RRP: £89.97

£39.99

Fisheagle Saracen Mackerel Rod 11ft 1-3oz 2pc

Fisheagle Q8 Surf Reel loaded with Mono

Fisheagle Rig Wallet and 10 Popular Assorted Ready Tied Bait Beach rigs

Spool of 40lb Powerstorm Vi Vis Shockleader

CODE	MODEL	CAPACITY	RRP	PRICE
SP2057	21G	1.5-7g	£29.99	£14.99
SP2061	28G	2.5-10g	£29.99	£14.99
SP2065	40G	4-15g	£29.99	£14.99
SP2069	60G	6-20g	£29.99	£14.99

FISHEAGLE

Omni Surf Rods

PENN

Rival Level Wind Multiplier



Shakespeare's great value Omni range is ideal for beginners and more experienced anglers alike, these rods maximise performance and quality at this key Shakespeare price point.

CODE	LEN	CASTS	PCS	PRICE
SP3994	10ft	4-6oz	3	£99.99
SP3995	12ft	4-6oz	3	£99.99

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A FLOAT ON A BOAT

Being able to cover ground or hold a bait static using a float is an underused boat fishing method; however, there are plenty of times when turning to a float is a great way to fish, as Tim Macpherson explains

Almost all of us have started out our fishing adventures float fishing. It is, for me, still one of my favourite ways of passing some fishing time. Being able to see the bite on the surface always makes the heart stop. Most sea fish feed on or near the bottom, which makes float fishing impossible on a lot of marks, but there are some scenarios where it will work better than any other method. From the rocks, or the end of a pier, float fishing is a very accepted technique to employ.

From a small boat or kayak it is not so widely practised, why is that? The same advantages are available in all situations, with the ability to impart natural movement to the bait and to cover ground at the natural speed of the tide or wind, or if the situation demands, to trot a bait down to a certain structure and then hold it there.

Mullet fishing in estuaries, pier fishing for mackerel and gar, rock fishing for wrasse, live-baiting for bass and chumming for sharks are some of the most commonly employed float fishing scenarios where I turn to the float.

The gear is always pretty similar even if the size of the tackle might vary a little. For gars, wrasse and pollack on the rocks I prefer to use sliding float with a bead and stop knot set at the correct depth – whether that is half depth for mackerel or hard on the bottom for wrasse. I'll often use a swivel or even a split shot above the hook length to prevent the float sliding weight sliding down to the hook eye.

For live baiting for bass, anchoring the boat and trotting the float back down the tide onto the mark is effective... using a stop knot to set the depth. The weight is really to get the fish down near the bottom rather than for cocking the float. Float fishing for mullet is a very different game requiring freshwater gear and very small hooks. I've even used float fishing techniques afloat for catching black bream over shallow wrecks and rock marks.

A good small eyed ray having fallen for a float-fished sandeel fished right on the bottom



VERSATILE RIGS

One angler I know about who has perfected float fishing is kayaker Paul Fennell. He has employed float fishing tactics from his kayak for a long time and he has perfected the way he rigs the float to overcome the pitfalls that he has encountered over the years. The current methodology means he can change float, weight and terminal rig to suit any depth or target species as the circumstances demand. This versatile and flexible approach has stood him in good stead with many notable captures to his rods of all kinds of species, not just the ones you might associate with float fishing. Wrasse, pollack, mackerel, bass and garfish are all the kind of fish anyone might expect to catch using float tactics, but Paul has had good success with rays, bull huss, cod, dogfish, flatfish, bream and even conger to his float rigs.



The lead link allows for an easy change in size of weight

TECHNIQUES IN DEEPER WATER

In shallow water, say up to 20ft deep, float fishing is a well practised technique, but getting a bait down to the seabed, and holding it there, in water 20m or more deep takes a bit more thinking about. On a kayak one is more hampered than you would be on the deck of a boat, so changing a normal sliding float can be awkward and takes too long, so Paul has borrowed from our freshwater carp cousins and attaches a standard through tube float from the bottom only. To attach the float Paul slips a silicon tube over the exit of the central tube with a hole in it and then glues an anti-tangle sleeve through the hole. This is a hollow boom to keep the hook trace away from the float when casting and prevent the hook from tangling around the top of the float.

The end of the main line finishes at a clip swivel with a lead clip slipped on the line above it. The lead clip allows quick and easy changes of weights, the silicon tube on the anti-tangle boom allows for changes of floats, while the clip swivel allows for changes of hook traces. The entire setup is easily changed in moments to suit the tide, depth and required fishing depth, although invariably Paul fishes on or close to the bottom. The sliding float is stopped by using a bead and a powergum stop knot that can be slid up and down the line to change the fishing depth until bites start.

TROTTING OR CASTING?

When float fishing you might just drop the bait in at a rod length and let the tide take the float away, trotting style, to cover more ground and allow the bait to be presented in a natural dead drift at the same, unhindered speed as the tide. There

are other times when you will need to cast to a specific feature or structure, and this is when the anti-tangle boom on the bottom of the float comes into play to keep the hook length clear of the float during flight. It also helps to feather the cast towards the end of the cast, so the trace carries beyond the float and lands without tangling.

Depending on what the target species is will dictate how to work the float and the size of float to suspend the required weight to keep the bait in the taking zone. Trotting the bait in the tide requires less weight because the bait is hanging suspended in the water and going along at the same speed, possibly just brushing the seabed, but with the weight off the ground. This has the effect of fishing similar to on the drift, but with the boat at anchor and just drifting the bait. This method is ideal for fishing cleaner ground for the likes of dogfish, flatties, gurnards and rays.



BOAT ANGLER



USING THE CURRENT

As soon as the float is held back the pressure of the current causes the bait to swing up in the water. This is a tactic that can be used from time to time and it often results in an induced take, with a fish pouncing on the bait as it arcs upwards. By holding the float back momentarily, and then letting it continue to drift again the bait, invariably a small, frozen sandeel used whole, swings up and if not taken then floats back down again in a very natural manner. If the upward swing doesn't result in a fish very often the bait gets taken on the drop back down again. This technique can also work with live-baiting for bass and pollack with a live mackerel.

If there is a particular piece of structure such as the edge of a ledge, a pinnacle or perhaps the side of a wreck, then anchoring up-tide and trotting the bait back to the target area holding it there is really effective. Taking into account what happens when the float is held back a larger float and heavier weight, balanced with each other, has to be used so the weight is enough to keep the bait suspended at the required depth. The value of easily changed components now becomes obvious, allowing a change of tactics or the ability to maintain control despite the change in flow through the tide. Holding

the bait at a specific spot will cause the float to wander from side to side as the current flows past it. The sandeel, or other bait, also held in the tide on a 2 - 3ft trace from the weight can be expected to be swinging or fluttering in the current too, making it very attractive and is a method that will account for many different species and some very good specimens too.

Maybe, having read this, more people will be moved to give it a go and we shall see some interest in reviving a very worthwhile technique. It isn't a method you can use on a crowded charter deck, but there is no reason why privateers can't make use of it from their own boats. If you do give it a go, let us see your catches. ■



A freshwater waggler float is ideal for mullet



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Here at Sea Angler we want to understand more about you, your fishing and the products you like. To be in with the chance to win one of three Amazon vouchers worth £100 each, please take a few minutes to complete

our reader survey. Your response to the survey will help us provide you with even more content and products that you'll love. To take part simply visit smartsurvey.co.uk/s/SeaAngler23

Don't worry – we know your time is precious: the survey shouldn't take more than 15 minutes to complete, after which you can choose to be entered into the prize draw to win £100 worth of Amazon vouchers to spend as you wish. The survey closes on October 16th 2023.

Thank you and good luck!

David Mitchell, Editor, Sea Angler

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SEA SCHOOL

KNOT KNOWLEDGE

Artwork by Andy Steer

THE FAT MONO KNOT

The Fat mono knot forms an extremely strong connection on heavy duty line. Not only is it easy to tie but it can be tied quickly while you are fishing. It is used for attaching hooks, lures and swivels to thick mono, hard mono or fluorocarbon line with a diameter of 1.2mm or more where the thickness and stiffness of the line makes it impossible to tie other knots. The fat mono reaches its limit at around 2mm diameter at which point even it reaches its capacity to be tied and crimping the line becomes required.

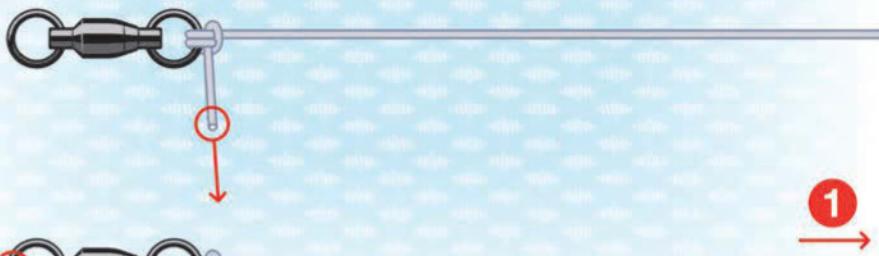
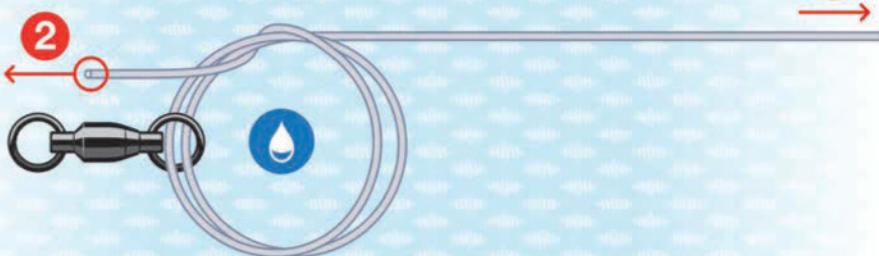
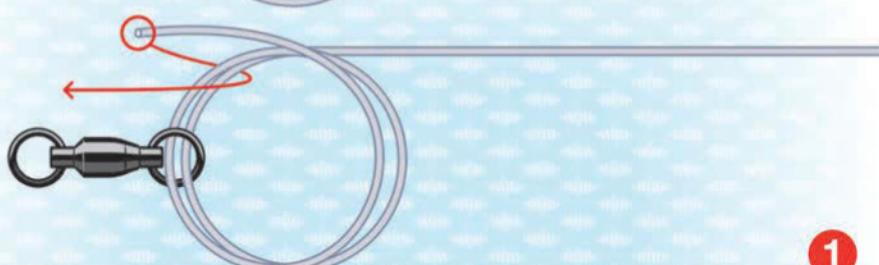
Step-by-step

1. Pass the mono or fluoro line through the eye of the hook or swivel twice forming a double loop.
2. Next, the tag end of the line is passed through the double loop that has been created (as shown).
3. Lubricate the knot and, using pliers, pull the knot tight from the tag end.
4. Pull the knot tight from the hook or free eye of the swivel and trim the tag end of the line leaving a few millimetres.
5. Finally, using a lighter, heat the end of the tag to melt it and form a ball or lump which will guarantee the knot does not slip.

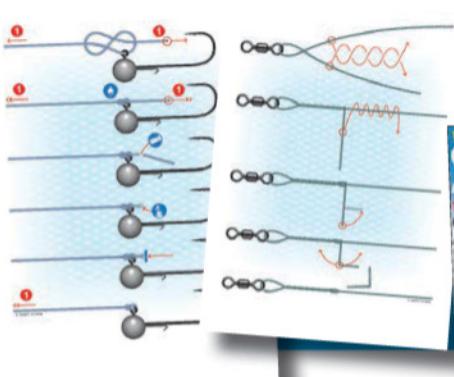
Check out the
step-by-step video at:
youtu.be/UvPpz6eE0io



Mono, hard mono
fluorocarbon line (>1.2 mm)



© ANDY STEER



MISSED AN ISSUE?
SEE PAGE 76 FOR OUR BACK ISSUES



NEXT ISSUE

In the October issue of **Sea Angler**

- Norfolk Broads bass
- Terrific triggerfish!
- In search of the perfect fish
- A skipper's Irish adventure

PLUS

New Where to Fish venues,
Rovex's 10X leader reviewed,
Tide Talk, Tales from the
Tideline and much more!

ONSALE SEPTEMBER 15TH



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SEA SCHOOL

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Q&A

SHORE ANGLING

ASK THE EXPERTS

When sending your question, please remember to include your name and address



CHRIS KENNEDY

Chris is a specimen hunting specialist based on Sark and answers shore fishing questions.



DAVE LEWIS

Based in Newport, South Wales, our contributing editor Dave answers boat fishing questions.



JOHN HOLDEN

A Sea Angler contributor for over four decades specialising in casting and rod building.



HENRY GILBEY

Angler, blogger and photo-journalist Henry, based in Cornwall, is our lure expert.



BEN BASSETT

The Plymouth angler and blogger will provide answers on the sport of light rock fishing (LRF), the go-anywhere tactic.

HOW TO ASK US A QUESTION

Email:
sa.ed@kelsey.co.uk
or online:
facebook.com/seaanglermag

By asking a question you are giving us permission to use your name and where you live in all versions and platforms of this magazine.

Q What's the trick to using a disgorger? I've got one but I struggle to get it to work when dealing with deep-hooked fish. Some anglers make it look so easy when it isn't.

ANDREAS LINDZ, WEST SUSSEX

CK says: Assuming you are using the standard type of disgorger, which has an elongated split ring type design at the end. You pass the line of your hook length through the hook length (snood, or line to the hook) through the split ring opening and turn it 90 degrees. Now your line cannot escape. You run the disgorger down the line until it passes the eye of the hook and contacts the shaft. Once in that position, you keep the disgorger in line with the fish and pull the hook length down alongside the fish whilst keeping the

line taught. The hook then starts to take on an inverted position, and the last part is that you give a tug on the disgorger, pulling upwards and the hook should just come free, as it is now facing the opposite way. What I should say is that there are many YouTube tutorials from sea anglers demonstrating this, which may help a person understand exactly what I am describing. You may find different sizes and lengths of disgorges more suitable for different sizes of fish or hooks. It is certainly something you should get better at with practice.

Q I'd like to try collecting live sandeels from the sand on my local beach as the tide goes out in the evenings. I've tried using a rake with little success. I've heard of 'vingling' where you use a special tool. How does this work and can I buy one anywhere?

GAVIN BRIDGES, DEVON

CK says: The method you are describing involves a knife with a cut out on the non-cutting side of the blade. The blade is put into the sand about five inches, and it is dragged, with the sandeel getting caught in the knife cut out. This is not a widely used method, and in my opinion, a cast net in the right area or raking for sandeel would be my chosen method if trying to catch them from the shore. As always, the crucial part is knowing they are there: it gives you options.



Q Do I need to belong to a club to claim a record fish? I've heard record fish need to be weighed on certified scales and the fish confirmed by a witness.

NIGEL MAYNARD, TEESIDE

CK says: No, you are not required to be part of a club or wider organisation to claim a shore or boat fishing record in the UK or Channel Islands. You would indeed need the fish to be weighed on certified scales. Witnesses or video would certainly help. However, the procedures vary as per the species

caught. We would recommend contacting the British Record Fish Committee. Tel: 01568 620447. Or by post: BRFC, Eastwood House, 6 Rainbow Street, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8DQ. Advice will then be given on the identification and if preservation is required.

WINNING QUESTION



Q What's the law about carrying knives in public? I regularly carry a large filleting knife with me when I'm fishing and travelling to and from my mark. Is it against the law to have a knife on me in a public place like a pier?

ALAN LEPARD, ESSEX

CK says: You are allowed to carry your filleting or boning knife if you have a good reason for carrying it. If you are going fishing, then it's fine that you have the tools necessary to partake in your hobby, and to prepare/clean

fish. My advice is that you keep such things hidden from public view where possible and with your fishing kit at all times. You are responsible for it; there may be dog walkers or children on a beach where you are fishing. It's a very bad idea to have a knife in your car, or on your person – especially with a blade over five inches – if you do not have a valid reason for having it with you. People can and have been prosecuted, hence why I say to keep filleting knives with your fishing kit, not separately. Only have a filleting knife with you when you intend to fish. I hope this helps. If looking for certain clarification, you may contact your local constabulary for best practices and guidance on this, which we recommend if you are not sure.

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- Two spools of Sufix tritanium
- One spool of Superior leader
- Two spools of shock max leader
- RRP: £65



BOAT CATEGORY:

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Prizes are subject to stock availability. Actual prize may be slightly different to those shown



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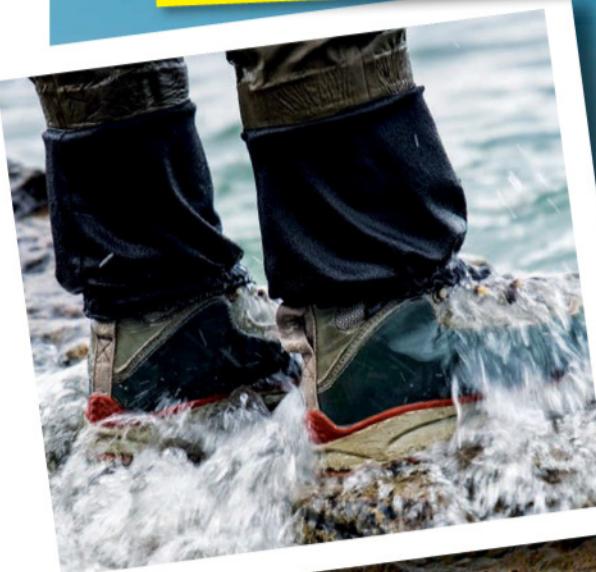
T&Cs: * One prize per winning question will be chosen by the editor. Prizes cannot be exchanged and no correspondence will be looked into. We reserve the right to send alternative prizes.

SEA SCHOOL

Our experts solve your fishing problems

Q&A

LURE FISHING



WINNING QUESTION

Q I need some wading boots to go with my waders, but how much do I really need to spend on them? They all seem so expensive!

TED LAMB, HAMPSHIRE

HG says: This is a real dilemma and I feel your pain, if that is any help! My view is that you either spend serious money on top of the range wading boots from the likes of Simms, Patagonia and Orvis, or you go for much cheaper boots and get as long a life out of them as possible. I don't think much of many of the cheaper wading boots which still might be around the £100 plus mark, but which tend to fall apart far too quickly, especially when used in saltwater.

Some of the really expensive wading boots are very comfortable to wear and scramble many miles in. But even then, if you fish a lot over tougher ground the high-end boots aren't generally going to last as long as their high prices

might suggest. The simple fact is that saltwater fishing over rough ground is incredibly hard on stuff like wading boots and waders; indeed, I now treat this specialist gear as an unavoidable cost and I budget accordingly.

Another much cheaper but very viable alternative is to go to Sports Direct and buy a pair of the Dunlop Dakota safety boots. Buy them two sizes over your UK shoe size if you are fishing in breathable waders. Get some Best-Grip studs, screw them into the soles, and away you go. For a hell of a lot less money you now have a half-decent pair of "wading" boots which will last you at least a season and quite possibly a fair bit longer.



I tend to use specialist canyoneering boots these days, specifically the Bestard Wildwater Pro boots, again, in two sizes over my UK shoe size to allow for the neoprene socks on the end of my breathable waders. These hiking-style boots are specifically designed for use in water and they are so comfortable and lightweight when compared to nearly all the specialist and more expensive wading boots which come from the freshwater fly fishing world.



Q I really like the idea of single hooks for my bass lures, but what do you think about them on surface lures? JON NAYLOR, DORSET

HG says: There is still one particular bass which I lost and which still haunts me; it came along when I was testing out surface lures with single hooks. Like you, I love the idea of single hooks instead of trebles but in all the time I gave to using single hooks on surface lures I just don't think that enough hooked fish stuck to make it a viable option for me. I know



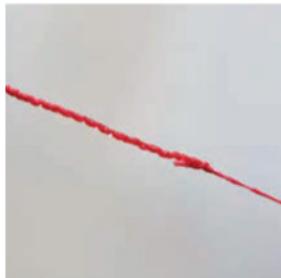
that not every bass which hits our lures is going to stick, especially on surface lures, but you know as well as I do when something feels a bit off. I do wonder whether oversize single hooks would have given me a better hook-up ratio on surface lures.

At the end of the day I go fishing because I want to catch fish, and by continuing to use trebles on surface lures I believe I am doing the minimal amount of damage possible by debarbing all my hooks and fighting my hooked fish really hard.

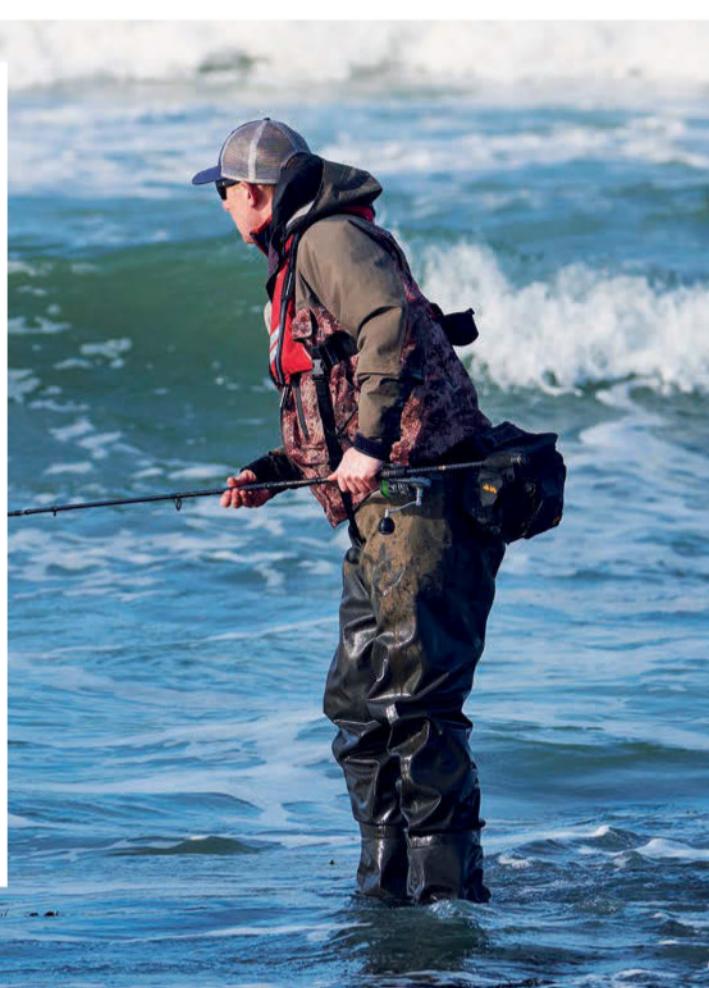
Q I am struggling to tie the FG knot; Do I really need it?

KYLE STEPHENSON, AVON

HG says: Yes and no: Sorry! Our bass are awesome fish, but they are not exactly the largest or most powerful fish in the world. There is always going to be the argument that one of the older types of leader knot which were developed before the current generation of even thinner and often smoother braids are going to be just fine. The Improved Albright or Uni to Uni braid to leader knots are good knots which are easy to tie, and in nearly every situation - if tied correctly! - they will be plenty strong enough to help land any bass you are likely to hook on 20lb braid to a 20lb fluorocarbon leader. However, why



not learn to tie the best and strongest leader knot which is specifically designed for modern braids? Why not use the FG knot because it enables you to get every single bit of good stuff out of what are often pretty expensive spools of 8, 12 and even 16-strand braids? Why put an older style of leader knot into very modern lines which perform better with a modern FG knot?



SEA SCHOOL

Our experts solve your fishing problems

Q&A

BOAT ANGLING

Q What is the difference between a green eel and a conger eel?

TERRY MADDOX, NORTHAMPTON

DL says: A green eel, or silver eel, is a freshwater eel (*Anguila anguila*), often caught by anglers fishing in estuaries. Green eels migrate from freshwater to the sea to spawn while congers spend their entire lifecycle at sea. They are olive green in colour while congers range from light grey to almost black. Green eels have a smaller head than conger, and are rarely caught over 2lb. If you do catch a green eel it must be released as soon as possible as they are endangered and protected by law.



Q Brilliant, bright sunny days can be detrimental to a day freshwater fishing. Does bright sunlight really affect a boat trip when fishing on the bottom in relatively deep water, say 60 or 70 feet?

CRAIG ELLIS, WREXHAM

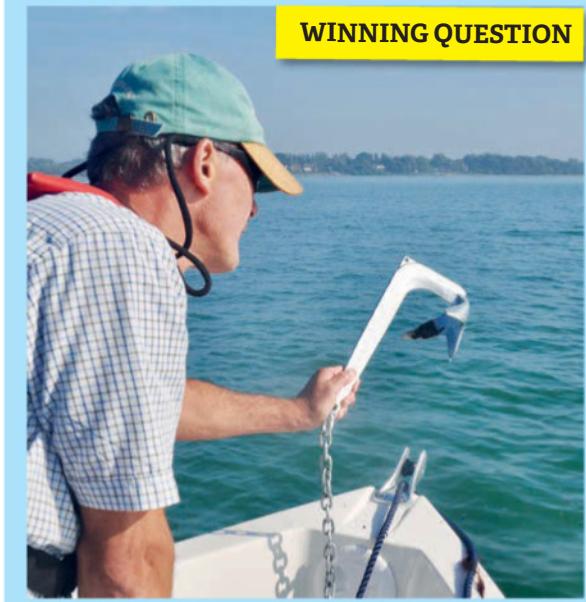
DL says: When targeting the vast majority of species I would say that the answer to your question is no. From my experience species such as bass, cod, pollack, ray, smoothhounds, tope and many others feed very well during bright sunlight. Some species, such as shallow water conger, for example, do become more active after dark. Usually it is the stage of the tide that triggers feeding behaviour.

Q What is the best type of anchor to use aboard a small boat or SIB?

MALCOLM LYLE, HAMPSHIRE

DL says: Much depends on the type of ground you are anchoring over, but in most situations a Bruce type anchor, as shown, will prove effective. Don't forget you need a length of chain, approximately equal to the length of your boat, in order to anchor efficiently. The weight of the chain ensures the anchor pulls in a horizontal angle across the seabed, ensuring it 'digs in.'

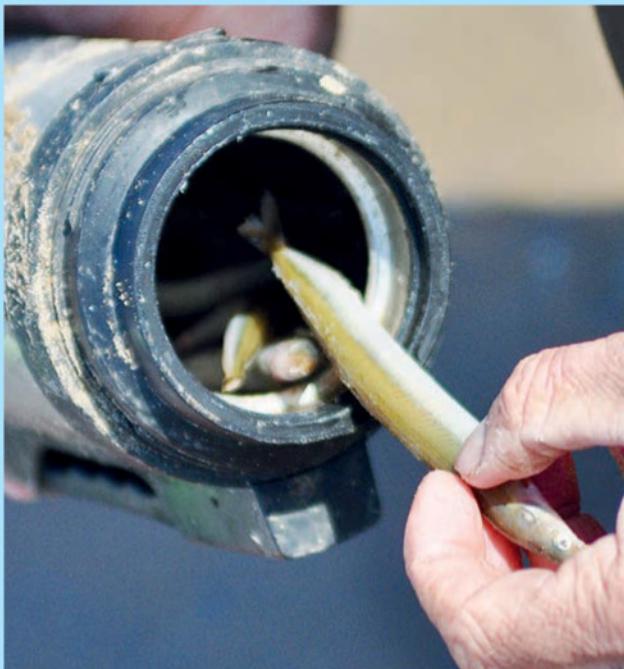
WINNING QUESTION



Q Sandeels are expensive and increasingly difficult to find in tackle shops, and I always seem to waste more eels than I actually use. Any advice on minimising wastage?

RICHARD WHITE, YORKSHIRE

DL says: Store frozen eels in a wide mouth food flask as shown. Now you will be able to remove an eel or two to defrost ready for use leaving the rest frozen, so they can be kept in good condition until another day.



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Q I have been told that 'rhubarb and custard' lures are very effective for wreck fishing. What are these?

JASON CASH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

DL says: Rhubarb and custard refers to the colour, not the specific type of lure. Usually these are soft plastic, shad type lures. A few years back this was the most popular and consequently effective lure combination used by anglers fishing wrecks or reefs for species such as pollack, cod and coalfish.



Q What is the speed limit in inshore waters around the UK?

MICHAEL SKINNER, KENT

DL says: Along the open coastline usually there is no actual speed limit, but you need to be fully aware of local 'no-go' areas that are cordoned off exclusively for swimmers and other areas subject to restrictions. Most harbours and the inner reaches of estuaries do have a speed limit, typically around 5-10kt. Usually these are signposted, if not contact the harbour master for advice. Alternatively you can research the area you intend visiting online, or study a good quality marine chart.



Q&A

LIGHT ROCK FISHING

Q Are scented lures like Isome, considered to be baits or lures?

DAMIAN OWENS, LIVERPOOL

BB says: They are a bit of both really! Berkley Gulp, Marukyu Isome, Ecogear Aqua and similar are all artificial baits, described as 'bait-like' by their manufacturers. They contain amino acids for attraction and often are pleasant smelling to encourage kids to start fishing. In the LRF world, there are two kinds of purists: those who think that using real/live bait, such as ragworm or squid strips, isn't LRF and those who think that using any bait, including artificial baits, isn't LRF. I fall into the first category. For me, Isome, Gulp and similar are so intrinsically linked with UK LRF that to deny them would be needlessly wasting your time, and end up putting off lots of future anglers. They are excellent tools for species hunting, and for getting consistent sport on difficult days. I won't be seen dead with real bait though!



Q I hear reports that ester line is hard work, needing real attention in line management. Is it worth trying for ultralight lure work?

ADKITTS, WEST YORKSHIRE

BB says: I have stated my love for ester line repeatedly on this Q&A over the last year or so. Although it is a little more brittle and a lot finer than fluoro or braid, I have no problems with it. Just don't buy ester that is rated to higher than 2.5lb and you should be ok. I have also been using a hybrid line from Unitika that is ester core with a nylon coating. This is rated to 3lb and I really like it. The main benefit is you get the directness of ester with the supple nature of nylon, meaning you don't need a leader: well worth a try.

SEA SCHOOL

Our experts solve your fishing problems



Q Can I have some help with tactics for species in Northumberland and East Scotland?

BENJAMIN, EDINBURGH

BB says: I haven't fished that corner of the UK unfortunately, but I have fished in Hartlepool a few times and on the west coast of Scotland. I know that there can be excellent flounder fishing in the harbours and estuaries in the warmer months, plus the codling and coley should be present too. I also know that the estuaries and coasts around those areas are prime locations for sea trout. So my advice would be to try dropshot tactics around your local harbour for the flounder, and whack out some metal jigs for the trout. Although we can look enviously at what others can catch in different parts of the country, tailoring our approach for what we have locally can lead to some excellent results.



SEA SCHOOL

How to improve your casting skills

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Century

SORT OUT YOUR SET-UP

Struggling with wildly unpredictable casting and not sure what's gone wrong or how to correct it? Try these two simple adjustments to your set-up and see immediate improvement in both your accuracy and height

Finding it hard to cast straight and even harder to throw accurately left or right? Struggling for height but usually ending up with the rig flying low over the sea, often going left as well? While it might be necessary to spruce up the whole casting technique, the cure usually involves just a handful of minor adjustments easily taken care of with a bit of practice.

Let's assume a fairly good casting style but neither as straight nor as consistent as we'd prefer. Ignore direction and distance for the moment and concentrate instead on setting up the cast exactly the same way each time. Cast smoothly and effortlessly. Notice where the sinker lands. It doesn't matter whether the cast is straight but it is essential to practise until each cast falls fairly close to the ones before.

Since setting up a cast should always start with foot position, the way to offset any natural tendency to throw a little to the right or left is to move the stance one way or the other. Altering the upper body to suit the stance is a bad idea; always change the stance. Stand as normal and imagine a straight line drawn from right heel through the left toe then running out to sea. If you're casting to the right, shift your feet so that the imaginary line angles more to

the left. Cast exactly the same as before, tweaking the stance a little if necessary, until the rig flies straight. This is your new go-to foot position. It may well feel wrong at first, but stick with it and it will become natural.

To cast deliberately right or left, which is often necessary to drop a rig well up tide so that it comes to anchor in front of you, shift your stance accordingly. Altering the upper body and arms to throw at an angle works fine for spinning and light work but fails with regular beach gear. Shift your feet accordingly and cast normally. Every cast should be straight relative to foot position, but that same foot position relative to the sea may change a lot.

The height issue is actually quite technical in theory but in real life all a beach angler needs to know is that where he looks hugely influences the rig's trajectory, and that style-wise the left-hand pull is king.

In tennis, archery and virtually all accuracy sports, it's vital to focus on what you want to hit. Casting is no different. Most people naturally look low over the sea roughly where they want to bait to land. The body responds by shoving way too hard with the right arm and shoulder while the left arm goes to sleep. The whole action is ugly and ragged; casts fly low and left, made worse by constant backlashes and snap-offs.

The instant cure is to visualise a target high in the sky and to power the cast with a strong yet smooth left-hand pull. Practise soon finds the best angle to look up at for everyday fishing. Focus on an aerial target a touch lower for casting into the wind, and a bit higher than usual with the wind behind. Look up and focus, think pull, and let technique take care of itself. Simple as that. ■



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TRACK AND TROLL

David Mitchell heads out to sea to test the Tracker Targa V-18 WT

With strong south-westerly winds, a chop on the water and the threat of yet more rain, conditions were less than ideal. Chichester Harbour in West Sussex is over 9000 acres of creeks and mudflats. It's a huge expanse to explore by boat and the ideal location to test the capability of a boat to fish in ultra shallow water, which at only a few feet deep in places is accessible only to boats with very shallow drafts – those that can creep up on bass and mullet, with barely enough water to cover their dorsal fins.

I was here with Ben Stevens to test out the Tracker Targa V-19 WT, a new boat being imported from the USA into the UK by RBS Marine. Trackers are deep-V aluminium hulled boats built in the landlocked US state of Missouri and used for freshwater small and large mouth bass fishing in the vast lakes across much of America. However, they are gaining popularity in saltwater and it was time to put one to the test in the brine of Chichester Harbour.

ALL IN ONE

The first standout features of the Tracker is the fact it comes as a complete package; everything is included to get on the water: engine, electronics, trailer, trolling motor and more. The second feature is that this is very much a fishing boat, designed and built for the sole purpose of catching fish – it's not a powerboat with a few angling accessories bolted on. Every single detail has been considered with the angler in mind.

The standard model comes with six upholstered seats – more can be added as the boat is coded to carry eight people. The seats are removable and can be rearranged across the deck including on the bow and stern. The two rear seats fold down



which creates a huge amount of additional useable deck space for such a small boat. Rod storage is immense with lockers located on both gunwales and in a compartment on the bow. The boat has two lit, recessed, live bait tanks and endless lockers; wherever there was unused space the manufacturer has installed a locker or stowage compartment.

Trackers also have the VersaTrack system running around the gunwale which allows you any number and configuration of rod holders, bait boards etc. at the exact location you want them. Being American the boat also has a generous number of cup holders for those all-important tasty beverages!

Despite having a low gunwale the seated position on the main deck is low enough that you feel you are in the boat rather than on top of it and the wrap around glass wind shield, along with the reverse chined hull, does a great job at keeping you dry from the bow splash. However, once standing, or sitting,

on the raised bow or stern positions the gunwale is only inches high. While this means it's easy to fall into the water it also makes getting down to the water level much easier to land or release fish. With a wide beam the boat is extremely stable.

The Targa 18 comes with the option of a 150hp, 200hp or 225hp Mercury outboard. This model has a 200hp Pro XS sport engine which growled and grunted satisfactorily like a classic American muscle car. Being limited to a measly 8kt within the harbour the engine was like a caged animal desperate to be released to its cruising speed of 34kt. Wherever you want to get to with the Tracker, it'll get you there, and back, fast! The throttle and steering are both super responsive and the stylish instrument panel, again, reminds you of a sports car.

GAME CHANGER

The harbour is a designated Bass Nursery Area – you cannot legally fish for bass between April 30th and November 1st. However, the harbour is typical of the type of shallow water estuary that many anglers would be using the Tracker to fish in. Ben's usual tactic when fishing waters such as this is to drift through the schools of feeding fish. However, the Tracker allowed us to test a new tactic, one that we soon realised would be a game changer and could be the single best feature of the boat; it was time to deploy the trolling motor.

Despite the low profile of the Tracker the strong winds were still getting hold of the boat which, along with the tide, were pushing us along at quite a lick. Dropping an anchor for such mobile fishing simply isn't practical, and even if it was, we would have been swinging around in the wind. The other option of holding our position with the outboard



wasn't either, principally due to the shallow water and the noise of the engine scaring any fish off within a 100m radius – not to mention one of us having to forgo fishing to take control of the engine.

The game-changing realisation came when Ben dropped the GPS controlled trolling motor from the bow and set it to hold our position. Not only did it keep us on the head of a pin by constantly making micro adjustments based on our GPS position but it kept the bow of the boat in the position we had set, not having to face into the tide as you would when at anchor. In addition, the electric motor was virtually silent causing all but no disturbance in the shallow creeks of the harbour.

With a sonar on the trolling motor and a second plotter on the bow Ben was able to see the fishfinder from the forward fishing position and control our position using the foot peddle control (pictured above) leaving his hands free to continue fishing. Over short distances we moved the boat using the trolling motor rather than starting the engine. I was impressed with the battery consumption of the trolling motor too. After four hours on the water and some pretty heavy use the battery was still at 75 per cent power. We didn't get the opportunity to explore the other functions of the trolling motor but these include being able to programme it via the Humminbird plotter, to follow contours on the chart, retrace previous drifts or circle objects at a set distance which might be fish holding features.

While the conditions may not have been as we had hoped the trip had been a spectacular success in getting some first-hand experience of the benefits

of using a trolling motor. These American boats are jammed packed with awesome features and are the perfect vessel for shallow water lure and fly fishing where being nimble and having the ability to move location quickly and easily are part of the game. The aluminium hull makes the boat light and easily trailerable with the electronics and interior protected by a high-quality travel cover that comes as standard. Adding up the features that come as part of the package it's priced very competitively and stands out on the water. I have no doubt we'll be seeing many more Trackers fishing from the coast around the UK just as soon as the word gets out. Ben and the Tracker will be at the Southampton International Boat Show in September. Why not go along and check it out for yourself? ■

SPECIFICATIONS

- **Tracker V19 WT Combo Tournament Edition**
- **Length w/swim platform: 5.82m**
- **Beam: 2.59m**
- **Max. recommended hp: 225hp**
- **Fuel capacity: 151.4l**
- **Max. person capacity: 8 persons**
- **Max. person, motor & gear weight: 748.43kg**
- **Interior depth: 73.025cm**
- **Draft: 47.625cm**
- **Average dry weight: 1000kg**
- **Engine options: 150, 200 or 225 XL FourStroke Mercury® Pro XS®**
- **Removable seat cushions**
- **18in wide jump seats**
- **Removable ski tow pylon**
- **Bow & console Humminbird®**
- **HELIX™ 9 G4N fish finders (MDI at bow, MSI at console)**
- **Minn Kota® Terrova® 24V, 80-lb. thrust 60in (1.52 m) shaft,**
- **Foot-control trolling motor with MEGA Down Imaging® and i-Pilot® Link**
- **From: £46,350+VAT (includes UK delivery, Customs, PDI and CE certification)**
- **www.rbsmarine.com**



FIRST LOOK

Your update on the latest gear arriving in shops

SCHÖFFEL SALAR II WADING JACKET

The new Salar II wading jacket from Schöffel has won the prestigious European Fishing Tackle Trade Exhibition (EFTTEX) Best New Product award. The machine washable, GORE-TEX waterproof and breathable jacket features a three-point adjustable packaway storm hood with peak, a reinforced net D-ring, a velcro fly patch pad and wading belt loops. Other features include a one-way YYK front zip, hand warming pockets and an internal security pocket. With a waterproofing of 28,000mm and breathability of 9 < 9 PA m²/W the jacket is at the high end of the waterproof and breathability ratings. The jacket comes in two colours: Forest or Graphite.

- RRP: £599.95
- www.schoffelcountry.com



SAKUMA PULLEY BEADS

The Pulley Rig has long been recognised as being perhaps the most efficient rig shore anglers can use when targeting sizeable fish such as ray and smoothhound at long range over rough ground. Sakuma Pulley Beads are strong, smooth and reliable swivel beads, that are perfect for use in pulley rigs. That said they do also have a multitude of other uses for both boat and shore anglers, notably for rigs including the Portland rig or running paternoster. Packaged in either 10 or 50 pulley beads per box.

- RRP: £2.27 (10) – £14.89 (50)
- www.sakuma.co.uk

MULTI-FUNCTION SCALING KNIFE

This multi-function 3-in-1 tool with a sawtooth design makes gutting and descaling fish both efficient and simple. Made of food grade stainless steel the tool is sturdy, lightweight, rust resistant and dishwasher proof. Simply move it from the tail to the head slowly and repeat the process until the scales are removed. It's the ideal tool for easily and cleanly dealing with your catch at home or once you've finished fishing.

- RRP: £9.98
- www.humblgret.com



SPINLOCK WATERPROOF PACKS

Spinlock Waterproof Packs are designed for use with Spinlock flotation products or independently. The sleek style and minimalist construction mean the packs stay out the way while fishing, storing all your essentials away from being eaten by corrosive saltwater. Available in two colours and three sizes the packs are fully waterproof. Other features include:

- Opening belt loop attachment
- Internal security loop
- External tether point
- Medium and large packs include a window
- Large pack - single pocket wraps over belt to form smaller pack
- Universal back loop allows attachment to hard or soft mounts

- RRP: From £27.64
- www.spinlock.co.uk



CATCH LIKE CRAZY

Chris Kennedy tests the new sandeel imitation lure from French manufacturer Fiiish and is impressed by just how lifelike this range of soft plastic lures is

As many of you know, Fiiish, the French lure manufacturer, are famous for their innovation. Their flagship lures, the Black Minnow, are arguably the best soft plastic lure out there and many have tried to copy them without the same success. Last month I took an in depth look at the Hypno Cast metal jigs. This month I am going to take a look at their Crazy Sandeel, a strong competitor to the Sidewinder skerries eel.

This comment will divide people, but the one thing I think Fiiish do exceptionally well is getting the flexibility of their soft plastic lures just right. The Crazy Sandeel is no exception; both the paddle tail and normal versions of these lures move superbly well when being retrieved. They are the closest things I have seen to a real sandeel or launce moving, which is a real selling point when attracting predatory fish.

TARGET SPECIES

You'll want to be using these lures over mixed or clean ground, as they are not weedless, and the hook placement is facing upwards. As a bass lure, they are ideal for being worked from the boat or shore across sandy gullies. Alternatively you can work them just to the side of dense reefs and watch hard-fighting fish like coalfish or pollock slam them hard. Ballan wrasse are also happy to hit them, as I am sure would cod, in areas where they are prevalent.

The larger sizes (150-300mm) incorporate a rattle to imitate the clatter of small baitfish and allow predators to detect the lure. The Crazy Sandedels are scented with a proven formula using anise, which attracts fish. Fiiish has also cleverly used colours which react to ultra-violet light so that fish will see them even in darker conditions. The lures are made using a patented HSV action, which gives them their natural movement in saltwater. The maximum size for the paddle tail version is 180mm.

From the shore on the South Coast of the UK, or in the Channel Islands, I would always choose the natural sandeel colour; in my opinion, it works best in clear water. You actually have a choice of six attractive colours (the paddle tail comes in eight), some of which are ideal at dusk or dawn or in dark conditions. The mango-juice (red/yellow) will be an absolute winner in Norway. There is a great colour, green, which is similar to the launce colouration. Fiiish have done their usual thing of giving an angler lots of



options in terms of jig heads, including Shore, Offshore, Deep and X strong. They go up to a maximum of 160g (10 - 40g for the paddle tail version). There are plenty to choose from depending on the setup you are using or the conditions you are facing. The jig heads are very simple to re-rig with new tails.

As usual, Fiiish recommends a spot of glue to hold the tail against the head and make them slightly more resistant to fish attacks.

My verdict is not only do these lures look fantastic, I feel they move a bit better than some of the others I have used of similar design. Anyone trying these will not be disappointed; they will find you fish if the predators are about. They cast quite well for a soft plastic lure, but it's all about the action in the water. The manufacturer has a video on their website for any of you who are curious about how these clever little lures swim when slowly retrieved. It's worth a look to understand just how realistically tempting they look to a hungry predator!

RRP:

- Soft bodies: £8.99
- Shore jig heads: £7.99
- www.veals.co.uk

WIN A NEW SONIK BLACK BASS FISHING SET-UP

Three lucky Sea Angler readers can win themselves a super Sonik SKS Black Bass rod from Sonik Sports, complete with a SKS Black Surf Reel and a spool of 18lb Ultrasonik saltwater monofilament

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The SKS Black Bass has recently been released and is a new addition to the SKS sea range, much improved on the previous SKS Black models. Featuring K-style guides, a more powerful blank and yet incredibly light.

This little rod is set to buck the trend in bass and estuary fishing. It's a powerhouse of a rod, yet exceptionally sensitive on bite registration. At 11ft 8in (two-piece) it casts like a dream and is suited to either fixed spool or multiplier reels.

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SHORE FISHING WITH ANTHONY PEARSON

John Holden reviews a new book of old stories which is destined to become a classic

I have read piles of fishing books, mainly how-to guides: that's what most fishing books are. But the books I like best are about the subjective and personal side of fishing – at its best, writing so picture perfect that you can imagine being there. There have been very few writers of that calibre, and within sea fishing today there are none. The very best story I know is Ernest Hemingway's Big Two-hearted River which, while billed as fiction, is too emotive and too finely observed to be anything but autobiographical.

The tale clearly impressed Anthony Pearson too, for there is a reference to it in Shore Fishing with Anthony Pearson, a collection of his angling journalism from the 1960s and 1970s. Like his book Successful Shore Fishing it will become a classic. Do read it if you can.

Anthony and other writers of the time, such as Clive Gammon, Bruce McMillen and Hugh Stoker, all with a rather traditional outlook, never really acknowledged the technical revolution going on around them. If fishing were music, they were classical while upstarts such as me and Terry Carroll were punks. If truth be told, we were too young and arrogant to appreciate the work the old guard did and how great a contribution they made.

Anthony travelled to Wales and Ireland for his inspiration. This lovely book, edited by Richard Baker, is a masterpiece of subjective and evocative writing about the fishing he loved and knew so well. As a Guardian journalist as well as a columnist for magazines including Creel, Fishing and Angling, Pearson also travelled far and wide. His love of Africa shines through in stories of marlin and other big-game-species. But you can tell that his heart lay in surf fishing for Irish and Welsh bass.

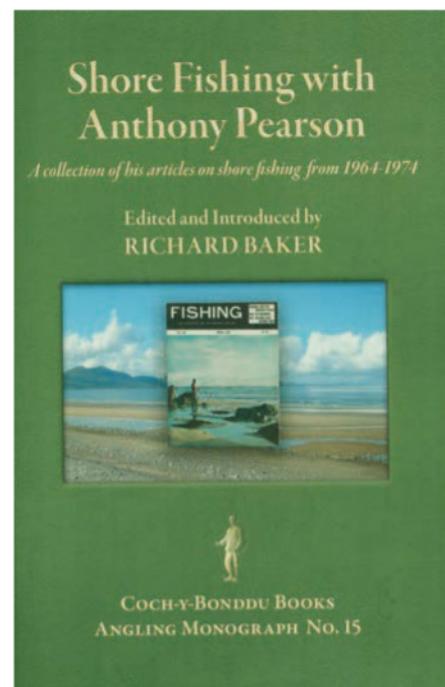
If you are new to the sport, these reprinted articles will feel dated in terms of tackle and methods, but from the fishing point of view they reveal a wonderful time sadly gone. You'll read about a profusion of hefty surf bass, big estuary tope beyond anything possible today, and a bit of beach cod fishing as well. Nobody caught that many double-figure surf bass, surely? Was he spinning a fisherman's yarn? Sure, he stretched it a little here and there, but if you'd been lucky enough to fish those same beaches back then you'd know how stunningly good they could be. This book stirred so many memories for me, of fish and fishing and above all of so many good friends now passed.

More than anything, perhaps, Pearson's dedication and sheer effort shine through to

make this book a solid historical record and a damned good read. It is clear that towards the end his outlook changed, almost verging on cynical now and again. It's as if he knew that his beloved world would disappear with commercial over-fishing, pollution and – a touch patrician of him, I think – too many of the great unwashed with fishing rods. Personal issues along with his experiences as a war correspondent in Africa may have coloured that philosophy. We shall never know, for Anthony died suddenly at 43 leaving so many stories unwritten.

I'll end with a quote from him as relevant today as it was then. "To me, shore fishing is the surf and the way of the tides and the seabirds, and the life of the shore on which the pattern of fish movement and behaviour depends. To be successful, the angler must study and understand all these things, and harness them to his approach to the catching of fish." Amen to that.

Shore Fishing with Anthony Pearson,
edited by Richard Baker is published by
Coch-y-Bonddu Books
(www.anglebooks.com) at £30.
ISBN 978-1-904784-45-6



"His love of Africa shines through in stories of marlin and other big-game-species. But you can tell that his heart lay in surf fishing for Irish and Welsh bass"





MOVING ONE STEP CLOSER TO A RECREATIONAL BLUEFIN TUNA FISHERY

A consultation has been launched on licensing recreational fishing for bluefin tuna. Tim Macpherson explains what this means and how to get involved

The consultation centres around “permitting regimes for the recreational targeting of bluefin tuna in UK waters” and is a statutory requirement because amendments to the 2020 Fisheries Act are needed to allow licensing of recreational anglers to target bluefin. Licensing is also a requirement of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). It should be noted this is not a precursor to introducing more widespread licensing of sea anglers.

Representatives from various recreational sea angling bodies, including the Angling Trust and the UKBFTA, worked with Defra throughout April and May to discuss the detail of the consultation, but it is important to note that it is Defra’s

consultation and not one run by angling organisations.

It focuses on the requirements for obtaining a license and the elements of a code of conduct. Targeting bluefin tuna needs preparation, the right gear and a level of skill handling large pelagic fish and it’s important to get the right management regime in place before the fishery opens.

Anglers will have an opportunity to provide responses to the Defra proposals and, of course, the Angling Trust, the UK Bluefin Tuna Association (UKBFTA) and others will be submitting their own responses, but it’s important that all angling groups and anglers, with an interest in this, should respond in their own right. The more responses that are submitted the better the chances of getting the framework of this new fishery right.

Steve Murphy from UKBFTA says: “This consultation brings us one step closer to the world class recreational bluefin fishery that we have campaigned for since 2018.”

At the same time Defra are opening a pilot commercial fishery this year – a move which has proved controversial amongst recreational angling groups because it would appear to be rushed and a result of pressure from commercial fishing concerns. It should be noted that because commercial fishing vessels are already licensed there was no need to go through the same process required for a recreational fishery. ■

The consultation runs from 17th July until 4th September and can be accessed on the Defra website: consult.defra.gov.uk/recreational-aquaculture-and-migratory-team/bft-recreational-fishery

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DOWN TO A DOG

Mike Thrussell reports back from Holyhead Breakwater where the UK's leading match anglers battled it out at the PENN Sea League final

Initially launched in 1999, the PENN Sea League quickly went from strength to strength and has become the main target event in the UK calendar for serious match anglers. What makes it unique is that being a league format it demands a consistent level of fishing. One or two good results, especially on your own patch help, but it's the points you pick up away from home that count and that proves an individual angler's overall ability to take on a wide range of sea and ground conditions, as well as having that all important multiple species knowledge. Adaptability is the name of the game!

This year's final fell on the 8th July with the venue the notorious outer wall on the Stena Line ferries-owned Holyhead Breakwater. The ground here is, for the most part, as rough as you'll encounter anywhere with heavy snags commonplace and tackle losses high. Just getting fish through this ground to the base of the wall is an achievement, but then you've got to winch them up from the sea to the top of the wall. This is no ground for soft-tipped match rods!

Booking in was after 8am and even at this early hour you could feel the excitement and anticipation of those competing. Match time was 10:30 to 15:30, SAMF (Sea Anglers Match Federation) rules applied with a minimum fish size of 18cm and catch and release. The anglers had no bait restrictions which fits this venue well as it can give a wide range of species that can be very bait specific.

**Anglers in
Zone B**

The match format was fished as two separate zones and the angler in each zone with the most fish points was deemed the zone winner. Penn Points would be awarded from 1st to 10th with the zone winner getting 10 points down to 1 point for 10th place. 44 anglers were listed to battle it out for top spot, though on the day it was 21 anglers per zone.

Match time approached with a fresh and gusty southerly wind and overcast skies that kept threatening rain. The wind was over the head of competitors in Zone A but was a nasty left to right wind for those in Zone B with big downwind bows in the line after casting making bite detection less easy.

With the tide on the flood as the whistle went, it was expected that Zone A would see the bulk of the early bites with singles, doubles and the odd triples of dogfish being recorded by the busy stewards. Match stalwart Torquay's Julian Shambrook was quick off the mark with a dog pretty much first cast to get the ball rolling. Those in Zone B were picking up odd fish too, mainly dogs, but knew that as the tide picked up later in the match B section would see more fish and offered the best chance of a bigger huss or thornback ray.

The preparation levels had to be 100 per cent for this match with competitors armed with a large number of leads and most having at least two, and some three, spare rods ready to go with rig clips to minimise the time loss when inevitably breaking



Phil Lee with huss



Pulling fish through the snags





You needed plenty of leads

off in the myriad of snags. Most were wise enough to bring mats, and some literally pillows, to put on the edge of the concrete wall so they could rest the rod on them and wind at maximum speed to minimise the snags. Also evident were small collapsible trestle tables or steps to stand on to get that extra height when reeling in over the wall.

Repeatedly walking both the zones, it was no surprise that many anglers were fishing 3-hook clipped down flappers with either sandeel or rag baits looking mainly for the dogs. The rag baits more likely to also pick up any additional species such as cuckoo wrasse, ballans, corkwings, pout, poor cod, rockling and the odd gurnard. A few lads had also twigged that having a single lumo bead above the rag baits increased the chance of getting a doggie bite as the sea was carrying a little colour.

Halfway through the match, with the sun now trying to break through and the wind dropping slightly, it had been mostly dogs, wrasse and the odd pollack from Zone A, but

I was in Zone B and my passing by coincided with Shoreham angler Phil Lee landing a 93cm huss which sent a buzz down the line of anglers.

Last peg on Zone B was Wirral angler Bill Lingfield and with the tide now well and truly up the base of the wall he was dropping in shorter and picking up smaller species such as pout, poor cod, and wrasse and that was a tactic that a fair few had to adopt if their peg wasn't giving the dogs they had anticipated.

Back in Zone A, Felixstowe angler Cameron Turner landed a 41cm thornback from out at range and local angler Gethyn Owen, from Penmaenmawr, scored points with a sizeable pollack. With the depth increasing close into the wall better sized wrasse started to be taken too. What was a surprise was that there were no smoothhound showing. This area is a top spot for hounds and a couple of anglers fishing crab said they thought they'd lost smoothhound, but none were caught that I saw.

DOWN TO THE WIRE

With less than a half hour left I chatted to PENN Sea League Administrator and England Men's Team Manager Ian Bowell who said it was nip and tuck between a handful of anglers. It was a case of fishing right down to the last second for those in with a chance. And it proved just so with Brighton angler Ben Arnold getting a dogfish on his very last cast to seal the outright win. Ben naturally won Zone A with Holyhead's Tony Roberts taking first in Zone B.

Ben was deservedly presented with the coveted PENN Sea League trophy by fellow match angler and PENN representative James Madsen at the nearby Prince of Wales pub to a loud and appreciative round of cheers and applause.



Triple shot of dogs

Chatting to Ben after the presentation he told me that he really wanted this win and had worked flat out for it from the start of the series. He said the venue was a great choice for the final due to the many challenges it throws up, even for these seasoned and highly experienced anglers, not least the rough ground and the height of the wall. His strategy was just to target dogs fishing sandeel and rag baits and whatever else came along was a bonus. He felt he'd likely lost smoothhounds during the match too, that just cut him off in the snags. He'd worked hard for it, got his wish, but said he's already looking forward to the next PENN Sea League.

All organisers and competitors were grateful to Pure Fishing, PENN Sport Fishing, Sea Angler magazine, SAMF, Stena Line, Anglesey Match Anglers Association and to Dave Cave and all the hard-working stewards for making this final one to remember! ■



Ben Arnold with the coveted trophy

MATCH TIPS



Sussex-based Dr Gem Stapleton is a Brand Ambassador for Tronixpro and an England International having won Gold fishing in the Ladies team at the Home Nations 2022. Outside of shore fishing, Gem has a PhD in mathematics and holds a Senior Visiting Fellow position at the University of Cambridge



Q How did you first get into shore match fishing?

Many years ago, when I was a junior, my dad worked for British Gas. I joined the south-eastern gas board fishing club that ran out of their social club, based in Brighton. There were monthly beach matches and boat competitions; I was lucky that my dad would take me to fish most of them. The club also held an annual open. I won the junior section when I was about 14-years-old, promptly using the £25 prize to buy my first multiplier, a Shakespeare Sigma!

Q What advice would you give to any young females getting into the sport?

Don't be put off by the sheer number of men who fish and the lack of women! Yes, it is male dominated but

most of the guys I've fished with have been totally encouraging and supportive. Ask for advice from those who are fishing around you; most anglers are happy to give it. I'm lucky as I am a member of a friendly club, where people are happy to offer advice when asked which helps everyone perform better. It's worth joining a club with quality anglers – the club to which I belong includes many of the best match anglers from the Sussex coast, past, present and future. If you can, learn from the best without expecting to beat them, and improve your fishing in the process. If you fish well in a match and get a result it means so much more. Oh, and take a beach shelter with a door on longer sessions. We all have to pee and it's so much easier for the guys!

Q What are your three top tips for match anglers to help them improve their results?

For me the most important thing is to arrive at a match with a plan of action. The plan should include what species to target, what rigs to use for them and what baits are expected to be effective on the day. Remember that as the match progresses the target species and tactics might need to change. Perhaps, for example, schoolies will be the target at low tide but then maybe mullet move in as the tide approaches high,

so the need for different rigs and baits arises. It is also important to plan for the unexpected too, as anything can happen on the day: I take alternative rigs and baits that might be appropriate for species that I don't expect to be the primary targets.

Secondly, in my view it is vital to play to your strengths. This might mean selecting matches to which your skills are well-suited and, for club events, making sure your plan fits in with where you think you can excel. For example, whilst my casting is solid, I know that I can't hit the distance achieved by some other anglers. This means my best chance of performing well might be to target species I'd expect to find closer to the shoreline, like flounders. I might have to put in more effort such as twitching baits to get interest from certain fish. By contrast, 'big hitters' might work more to a system of 15–20-minute casts and not worry so much about watching for bites and trying to attract fish to their bait.

As a third tip, I'd say be prepared to work hard for your fish. Even just one extra fish can make all the difference on match day. The hard work starts before you even leave home, making sure your rigs are in order and bait is the best quality you can get. On the beach, pay attention to what others are catching, how far out they are casting and what baits they are using.

Q What are the most common mistakes average match anglers make that can be avoided?

The most common mistake I've witnessed is anglers not putting in the effort during a match. This includes sitting down, relaxing in their shelter, not paying attention to what is being caught around them and not changing their tactics when what they are trying is not working. People often think if they are not catching then the fish aren't in front of them. Yet, sometimes a small change can yield a bite; little things can make a big difference.

I am a firm believer in effort equalling reward. Of course, sometimes people pick up a bonus fish and win, but consistency of performance comes from continued, high levels of effort. I also think sometimes anglers do not ask enough questions of those around them who are performing well. We all improve by helping each other, and match fishing is no exception.

Q Who has inspired you and why?

Neil Mackellow, Andy Baker and Wayne Hand. Neil Mackellow was my idol when I was a youngster and I dreamed of being able to cast 200 yards. I spent many evenings as a teenager working on my casting – and still work on it today – because of the stories in Sea Angler associated with Neil. I've not hit the 200yd mark yet, but have managed 186yd on a 150g at Sussex Casting Club.

Andy Baker, who I still see fishing on the beach, was a member of the gas board fishing club back in the 1980s and he was the guy to beat! I'd watch him fishing the club matches and dream of catching as much as he could, as consistently as he could. I was lucky to be able to learn more about fishing from Andy and other club members back then. I get inspiration from Wayne Hand because of what he has done for the fishing community. His YouTube channel – The Shore Hunter – is awesome, promoting our sport in good light. I appreciate the time he takes to talk through his rigs and bait, whilst showing fishing as it really is: the

blanks get uploaded to his channel as well as the amazing sessions he has on Chesil Beach. Watching his videos makes me dream of sessions on Chesil, my favourite venue.

Q What's your favourite species to catch and why?

I love fishing for flatties and, in particular, sole. There is something relaxing about hitting the beach on a warm summer's evening to target these feisty fish.

Last year I worked on improving my sole fishing tactics and came to appreciate the significant impact on catch-rate that my chosen rod could have. I compared a standard beach caster to the Tronixpro Banzai Multi Tip rod, which has three highly sensitive push-in tips. The sole

bites were phenomenal on the Multi Tip and my hook up rate was massively improved. For me, the vicious bites and spirited fight you get from sole leads to a real adrenaline rush – I need to get out to my local beaches and try for a few soon!

Q What's your proudest memory of being an England team member?

My proudest moment has to be winning the Gold medal at the Homes in 2022. The team worked super hard in the build-up to the competition, putting in many hours of preparation work and meeting regularly before the event to share knowledge of best practice. Beyond the team, a large number of individuals contributed to our development and every one of them was vital to our success. ■





SEA LEAGUE

The latest results from Britain's biggest event for shore match anglers

LEADERBOARD AS OF AUGUST 4TH 2023

Shane Russell	Old Colwyn	71
Saul Page	Deal	67
George Smith	Grimsby	63
Ben Arnold	Brighton	56
Ged Stevens	Bar in Furness	47
Joe Wales	Shoreham	45
Philip A Lee	Sussex	44
Darren Bond	Lancing	38
Sam Collier	Deal	38
Shaun Tucker	Swansea	38
Paul Medd	Scarborough	36
Henry Randell	Bodham	35
Alan Price	Rhyl	34
Nathan Elliott	Dover	34
Rob Tuck	Holland on Sea	34
Dave Shorthouse	Kettering	32
Julian Shambrook	Torquay	30
Lee Smith	Hull	30
Jim Morris	Chester	27
Tony Roberts	Holyhead	27
Adrian Bordianu	Taverham	25
Chris Read	Cardiff	24
Gareth Griffiths	Bar in Furness	24
Ben Shepherd	Maryport	23
Gavin Owen	Consett	23
Bill Lindfield	Greasby	22
Rory Jenkins	Tonyfrail	22
Richard Yates	St Mar Bay	21
Rob Marshall	Taunton	21
Cameron Turner	Felixstowe	20
Dave Delaney	Walker	20
Dave Dai Llewelyn	Barry	20
Gareth Gardiner	Sunderland	20
Mike Coates	Hull	20
Roy Tapper	Cardiff	20
Scott 'Pippen' Moore	Hartlepool	20
Chris Jones	Porthcawl	19
Darren Newland	Ryde	19
Wayne McGilloway	Greenfield	19
Shaun Moore	Cardiff	18
Simon Springell	Watchet	18
Steve Roberts	Cardiff	17
Craig Buy	Colchester	16
Darren Browne	South Shields	16
Matt Frost	Woodbridge	16
Paul Parsons	Eastbourne	16
Simon Drayton	Gainsborough	16

Steve Adams	Chelmondiston	16
Craig Bradshaw	Ipswich	15
Darren Pashby	Driffield	15
Joe Plumstead	Pevensey Bay	15
Lloyd Summer	Caerphilly	15
Matt Malia	Rotherham	15
Till Hall	Bath	15
Adam Johnson	South Shields	14
Dave Bowering	Cardiff	14
Dave Hutchinson	Blackpool	14
Ian Bowell	Ipswich	14
Leigh Rogers	Milford Haven	14
Neil Cutler	Gateshead	14
Steve Potts	Gosforth	14
Andrew Dugdale	Peel	13
Ben Richards	Ramsey	13
Chris Clark	Sway	13
Chris Fisher	Aldbrough	13
Fiachra Cronin	Tralee Bay	13
Mark Cowell	Llantwit Major	13
Shane (Red Sg) Giles	Deal	13
Chris Equall	Cardiff	12
Chris O'Sullivan	Tralee	12
Dai Loder	Cwmbran	12
Dave Cave	Holyhead	12
Kevin Warner	Horncastle	12
Scott Davies	Abergele	12
Tom Wells	Deal	12
Andy Clark	Redcar	11
Barry Diaper	Stowmarket	11
Garry Davies	Swansea	11
Gary Wood	Holyhead	11
Jimmy Price	Abergele	11
Joe Arch	Llanishen	11
Alby Allan	South Shore SAC	10
Andy Crowe	Scarborough	10
Anthony Cole	Millom	10
Danny Woodcock	Weymouth	10
Dave Bielby	Scarborough	10
Mark Chruckshank	Port Talbot	10
Wayne Davidson	Thornton	10
Wayne Leason	Hull	10
Aidan O'Halloran	Lisdoonvarna	9
Alan Combe	Kirkcaldy	9
Billy Potter	Worthing	9
Colin Carey	Worthing	9
David O'Sullivan	Tralee	9

James Madsen	Clevedon	9
Karl Fogarty	Dublin	9
Simon Dawber	Blackpool	9
Steve Tucker	Neath	9
Brett Bartram	Barton	8
Chris Jenkins	Bridgend	8
Jordan Hunter	Sunderland	8
Mark Rogers	Maidstone	8
Steve Ingleston	Whitby	8
Ben Price	Holyhead	7
Chris Horn	Kirkcaldy	7
Chris Stringer	Whitley Bay	7
Darren Stevens	Bristol	7
Ian Marshall	Driffield	7
Ian Nelson	Grimsby	7
Kevin Lewis	Dundee	7
Mark Taylor	Grimsby	7
Mike Fox	Withernsea	7
Mike Taylor	Eastleigh	7
Paul Kemp	Hull	7
Paul Tuck	Maryport	7
Steve Williams	Jarrow	7
Tony Thomas	Sheringham	7
Adrian Colling	Filey	6
Ben Bradstock	Honiton	6
Garry Hutson	Cleethorpes	6
John Hopkins	Bridgend	6
Keith Warren	Clevedon	6
Kevin Richardson	Burton	6
Lewis Clark	Rochford	6
Mark Shortt	Bray SAC	6
Mike Treherne	Sleaford	6
Nicky Robson	Wallsend	6
Noel Fogarty	Dublin	6
Orry Turner	Isle of Man	6
Peter Hammond	Ferryside	6
Ralph Crosby	Hastings	6
Scott Busher	Port Talbot	6
Simon Phelps	Milford Haven	6
Tony Owen	Wales	6

All anglers who are registered and have scored 6 points or more up to and including 18th July.

FULL LIST ON SA WEBSITE



HOW IT WORKS

With £10,000 in tackle prizes the points, based on entries, are awarded to the top three plus section winners and captors of the largest fish caught in each designated Penn match. Penn also awards a prize of a Spinfisher fixed-spool reel to the angler scoring the most points in matches shown in each issue. If there is a tie, the winner will be the angler whose total is from the greatest number of results and is then chosen on merit by the editor. An angler can win only one reel during the year. To win a prize you must be registered with the Penn Sea League – supply your name, address, phone and email. Send fixtures, results and league registration by email to Ian Bowell: ian.bowell@icloud.com

Winner of July 2023 monthly competition is Shaun Tucker with 38 points

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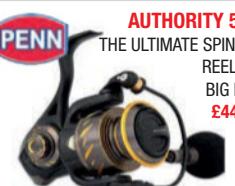
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